Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Castro Sends Letter to UN Secretary General

FL2112211589 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2015 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Report by Jose Mayo during special edition of the "Exclusivo" program]

[Text] We have just received a cable from the PRENSA LATINA news agency that highlights segments of the letter sent by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. The cable begins like this:

President Fidel Castro today demanded from the United Nations a decisive action that will end the U.S. aggression against Panama. In a letter sent to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the highest Cuban leader warns that the statements made by the members of the UN Security Council will not do much good if they cannot stop the unpunished trampling of the United States on the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of another state. He also demands the cessation of aggression and the unconditional withdrawal of the invaders. In the letter, Fidel expresses his hope that the UN Security Council, its president, and the UN secretary general act in a decisive manner, in favor of the Panamanian people who are being attacked and are defending, with integrity, their right to freely decide their destiny.

The message adds that for the Cuban people and their government, which next year will share the responsibility of the UN Security Council, the UN Charter is not and cannot be just wet paper, a rhetorical reference that the powerful can violate at their whim, mocking the right of the peoples.

Fidel's message also says that this is an aggression by the United States, one of the UN Security Council's permanent members, and as such it holds special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security in a country of approximately 2.5 million people.

Another part of Fidel's letter states that today the blood of hundreds of Panamanian patriots is being spread on the generous land that liberator Simon Bolivar chose as the headquarters for the Amphictyonic Congress almost 100 years ago.

Furthermore, the Cuban leader recalled that the interventionist clawings of the U.S. Government against Santo Domingo, Grenada, and Nicaragua are still recent wounds.

Finally, the Cuban president insisted that the only peace and safety that our people can hope for is that which we can obtain ourselves, with our heroism; and that the only path to victory is the one of resistance that is being carried out today in Panama against the invaders.

Fidel Castro Speaks on Panama Situation

FL2212071689 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0407 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Speech by President Fidel Castro at awards ceremony for outstanding athletes of 1989 at the Ciudad Deportiva in Havana on 21 December—recorded]

[Text] Comrade athletes, comrade guests: A few days ago we had planned to celebrate the ceremony that is being held today. During the past few hours, we were thinking about whether or not to suspend this ceremony becuase of events of which you are aware. We had also planned a reception for the athletes a long time ago, but naturally the reception was suspended until a more appropriate time. We did want to hold the ceremony, anyway. However, I do not think we are in the mood today to talk about sports, in particular. Sports deserve all the honors and glory. Athletic victories are one of the most legitimate fruits of the revolution. This has been a year of great successes, of great satisfaction for our people, of great glory for our sports, which are like a preamble to our even greater glories in the future.

However, we are not in the mood to discuss sports. It is better to dedicate some words to the heroes of our America who at this moment are fighting for the dignity, honor, and sovereignty of our peoples. It is better to dedicate a memory to those who are dying at this moment, to those who are even being massacred with the bombs and the sophisticated means of the war of imperialism. We must think about the fact that they are fighting at this moment. Thus, our ceremony coincided with one of the most painful, dramatic, difficult moments of our contemporary history and with regard to what Marti called our America.

We have been witnesses and have received news, to greater or lesser degrees, about everything that began to happen since 20 December during the early morning hours. It is not that we were surprised by the events. It is not that we did not imagine imperialism to be incapable of such a crime. The events could be anticipated. They had been denounced with special emphasis by our country just 2 or 3 months ago. We are now in December, and these denunciations were made around August or September. They were strongly denounced during the nonaligned summit. We know the enemy; we know the nature of his morals. Therefore, what they did could not be a surprise. However, despite the fact that the events could be anticipated and were denounced, we could not stop feeling extremely angry, irritated, and embittered from the bottom of our hearts. One cannot react in any other way in the face of such crimes.

We have been witnesses once again to how imperialism acts. We have seen in one way or another or we have heard on television or radio broadcasts their excuses and explanations for carrying out this savage and uncivilized act. We have heard the spokespersons of imperialism, from the President of the United States to the secretary of state, including the secretary of defense and the chiefs

of the Pentagon. It causes repugnance, disgust—the way in which they try to justify their actions—the lies, the ridiculous excuses.

They say that the Panamanians killed an unarmed soldier, but everyone knows that the soldiers had been in the bars of Panama. They were drunk, and who doesn't know what Yankee soldiers do when they are drunk. Once they even dared to climb on the statue of the hero of our national independence in the main park. There are pictures of that somewhere. They fired on and injured Panamanians. One of them was killed as a result of the provocation. What could men of an institution do, when they were at their posts and were attacked? Now the imperialists say that an innocent, unarmed soldier was killed.

It seems that they were taking an American woman to the party. According to these spokesmen, the Panamanians not only killed a soldier, but also attempted to sexually abuse an American woman.

They have said these things, and they have repeated them a hundred times to make a genocidal action against the Panamanian people appear as the most natural and most justifiable thing in the world. These are the methods; this is the style used by imperialism. We know this quite well because of wide experience. We know how many lies are involved in this sad episode of the aggression against Panama because we have seen the video clips on our television of the dozens of occasions, of the hundreds of occasions, on which the Yankee troops violated the sovereignty of, humiliated, and offended the Panamanian people.

This was happening virtually every day. There are videotapes, clips of those actions, which all our people have seen. They did not respect streets or avenues. They sent their helicopters, their tanks, their armored carriers, and their troops of mercenaries with their typical faces of murderers everywhere in the Panamanian capital, to any town, thus violating every international law.

It is now claimed that the Panamanians are the provocateurs; it is now claimed that the United States had to launch an invasion against a small country in our hemisphere to defend U.S. security. I want to repeat this: These pretexts and lies are repugnant; they stink. They have spread these pretexts and lies throughout the world through their powerful mass communications media.

The real fact is that they invaded Panama. In what style? In a style known to people not too long ago, in 1939, in the style of the Nazis and of the fascists, who used similar pretexts to start their aggression. They followed the style of the Nazis and the fascists of launching surprise attacks, without any prior notice. This time, they did so in the pre-dawn hours, at 0100, when people are supposed to be resting, when the workers are resting, when even the soldiers are resting. They did not just attack one position; they simultaneously attacked all military units and the strategic, important points of Panama. Thus, they have taken destruction and death to that sister Latin American nation. Thus, they have shed—in a few hours—the blood of thousands of Panamanians, most of them civilians. This did not happen because the mercenary soldiers risked their own lives in the attack. On the contrary, they killed as many people as necessary to prevent their own casualties. They did not send their soldiers in those places where they would meet resistance. They sent planes and helicopters to bomb those places; they blast these places with artillery fire. Later, they sent their men. If they met resistance, they would retreat again, and they would send the Air Force again and artillery fire. This is the type of war they fought in the capital of Panama. This is why they caused thousands of civilian casualties.

While the mercenary soldiers of imperialism were immediately treated, were picked up by ambulances, taken to hospital planes, and were transferred to the best hospitals in the United States, they did not even allow the ambulances to pick up the wounded Panamanian combatants. They did not even allow the ambulances to pick up wounded civilians. Thus, people died; they bled to death in the very heart of the Panamanian capital.

Those who could be taken to the hospitals by their own people could not be adequately treated because there was such a large number of victims, despite the extraordinary efforts made by the Panamanian doctors, and because they were short of plasma, they were short of medicines, there was not adequate room in the hospitals, there was not enough equipment, there were not enough surgical instruments. Thus, we have seen video clips of dozens of civilians, men and women, old men and children, whose bodies crowded the hospital corridors.

Cuba not only addressed all leading international organizations; it not only addressed the United Nations, but also the Nonaligned Movement and all organizations that could join in the struggle, in the effort to stop this barbaric action by Yankee imperialism. Cuba not only talked to many friends in the world, but also addressed the International Red Cross, the highest Red Cross officials, explaining to them what was happening there with the victims of the invasion, telling them that it was urgent that they take action to treat the wounded Panamanians, who were even prevented from receiving treatment because of the action of the mercenary soldiers of the empire.

We have expressed our desire to cooperate. We are willing to send bread—our bread—our doctors, our equipment, our surgeons; as we have done time and again during these years of our revolution to help countries whose governments were our enemies, as we did with Nicaragua under Somoza; as we did with Honduras when it was hit by an act of God, by cyclones or earthquakes; as we did with governments with which we did not even have relations, as happened once on the occasion of that dramatic earthquake that occurred in Peru.

We are now confronted with the reality that one cannot help the wounded Panamanians because the Yankee troops are there and they do not want the wounded Panamanians to be assisted. What degree of barbarism, of abuse, of monstrosity have we reached in this world? Thus, while the wounded soldiers of imperialism are being taken immediately to the best hospitals, the Panamanians are bleeding on the streets.

That is why I say that the facts are sad enough, difficult enough, to irritate and embitter anyone. Not to mention the brutal, illegal, and unjustified nature of the Yankee action, but in addition to that, truly historic things have also occurred. The resistance of the Panamanian people, the Panama Defense Forces [FDP], the civilians organized into Dignity Battalions, and other organizations was truly significant.

The empire thought that it would only last minutes, maybe hours. They thought that when the paratroopers jumped, or the planes or helicopters attacked, not a single soldier would remain on the battlefield. Such is the idea they have of Latin Americans. They still have not learned enough. Such is the idea—more than the idea, the contempt—that they show toward our people. The real fact is that they did not want there to be any combat by dawn. The U.S. President had a speech ready for 0700 to announce that everything had ended. One could see discouragement, anger, almost panic on the face of the U.S. President.

That morning it became evident that despite the tens of thousands of soldiers—the hundreds of planes, helicopters, cannons, and armored vehicles—despite the surprise attack, they found the heroic resistance of the FDP and the civilians who opposed the aggression everywhere. In that respect, they were not able to imitate Hitler. In that respect, they were not able to imitate the fascists and Nazis of 1939 or 1940. The Nazis were at least able to take the cities in a matter of hours, in many countries against very well-armed armies. The empire, at the end of 24 hours, had still not been able to take the capital of Panama, despite the fact that they were right next door, despite the great superiority in men and, above all, in technology. They were not able to defeat the resistance of a handful, a few thousands of combatants.

You should not imagine that Panama has a large military force. It has a few thousand men in its Armed Forces distributed throughout the country, and a few thousand civilians organized and trained over a relatively short period of time. You should not imagine large military resources in Panamanian hands. Many of our municipalities have more arms and more firepower than what the Panmanian people had during this aggression. We ourselves have calculated our firepower and compared it to that of Panama. According to our calculations, Cuba has between 200 and 300 times more firepower than Panama, in terms of means of combat, of number of weapons, of the capabilities of our weapons.

Yet, 30,000 Yankee soldiers, attacking by surprise in predawn hours, were unable to seize the city on 20 December. Even today, they took another 24 hours to attempt to overpower resistance in a city trapped between the Pacific Ocean and the Canal. Thus, we believe that in the past 48 hours the Panamanian people have achieved one of the most heroic feats in the history of this hemisphere, and the empire has achieved none of its fundamental objectives. They have not even captured the FDP chief, which was one of the fundamental objectives of the savage, illegal action. They wanted to capture him to take him to the United States. Look at the extreme we have reached. This marked the implementation of a new imperial principle whereby the imperialist armed forces may land anywhere to arrest individuals wanted by their courts, as they claim; or people who may violate their laws; or those they regard as terrorists, anywhere in the world.

This is practically the first time they have implemented this principle. They have invaded a country; they have sacrificed thousands of people under the pretext of capturing a senior official of a sovereign Latin American state that is an outstanding member of the Nonaligned Movement and of the United Nations.

They are frustrated because they have not achieved this objective. They also said they were going to bring democracy through a puppet, repugnant, mercenary government that was imposed on the Panamanian people there through the bloodshed of Panamanians. They also said they were going to guarantee the Canal treaties and used other similar pretexts. What they have done thus far is to earn themselves worldwide rejection, but they have not been able to crush resistance, they have not been able to liquidate the problem in a few hours as they expected.

The great army of the great empire has been ridiculed by the Panamanian combatants. What do they fear now? What are they afraid of? They are afraid of a prolonged resistance. Its tactic was to attack the capital, to appoint a puppet government, and starting from there, to ask everyone else to surrender. It is as though they attack Havana one day, and, after seizing it, they ask the Pinar del Rio people to surrender, they ask the Villa Clara people to surrender, they ask the people of the eastern region to surrender, they ask the combatants of the Sierra Maestra to surrender.

That is their hope, their idea. They are using their technical means to manipulate television and send messages. They are using clandestine radios, applying methods of psychological warfare to give people the idea that there is no resistance, to lie to the world.

Yesterday morning, 6 hours after the attack began, we saw how they were already telling the world that every form of resistance had ceased. The Panamanian radio network was able to broadcast what was happening yesterday for 15 hours, urging the people to fight until a direct attack by helicopter gunships silenced the Panamanian radio station. Yes, the Panamanians have also

been listening to international radio stations. They have been listening to Cuban radio stations: Radio Havana Cuba, Radio Rebelde, and other stations, which were in frequent contact with Panama yesterday, and they were informing the people of what was going on. Today, these stations continued to report, though the Yankees attempted to intercept them. They attempted to interfere with them because they did not want, not even through Cuban radio stations, for the Panamanian people to find out what was happening.

What is it that they fear now, as if it were the devil himself? What is the fear that almost all the spokespersons of the empire show? It is the fear that the resistance continues. It is the fear that the combatants of the FDP, Dignity Battalions, Panamanian patriots continue the war in the interior of the country. They know that with their large crushing number of forces they can, in a long or short period of time, control the capital. However, the panic that they feel—and all the steps they are now taking are all inspired in that panic—is the panic that the patriots organize in the interior of the country, in the wooded and mountainous areas, to continue the war of resistance. Their idea is to present to the world the action as finished. That is why today they are using all the possible means to confuse the Panamanians, to tell them that all resistance has ceased. They fear they may get entangled there.

It is not the same thing to control a city with the means they have as it is to destroy the resistance. If the Panamanians, using the rich experience they have in irregular war... [changes thought] and that is something we have studied a lot. It is something in which we have trained all our combatants in the country. It is what we call the idea of the war of all the peoples. The experience of the revolutionary movement has accumulated in the last few years, as well as our own experience. After all, we did not begin our liberation war in the capital of the country. We began in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra until our guerrilla struggle extended throughout the country. That is what the United States fears now. That is what they are trying to prevent at all costs right now in Panama. The powerful imperialist gentlemen are frightened, and they have reason to be. But little by little, they will have to learn what we are capable of—these people who they despise so much, and who we know as Latin American people. They have been learning lessons.

They already learned one lesson in Giron a few years ago; they learned another in Nicaragua with the Sandinist combatants; they learned a spectacular lesson in recent days with the heroic actions of the Salvadoran revolutionaries and patriots, because it was truly extraordinary that following 10 years of a steady supply of arms to the genocidal government of El Salvador—of means, of helicopters, of planes, of the most modern infantry weapons, of communications equipment, of everything—that following 10 years, the number of Salvadoran combatants has increased; that the Salvadoran combatants were able to enter the streets of the capital and hold in check for entire weeks that so heavily armed army, which is so heavily supplied and trained by the United States. This happened only 5 or 6 weeks ago.

They have now seen what happened to them in Panama. They are aware that if the Panamanian patriots take into account the Nicaraguan experience, if they take into account the experience of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] in El Salvador, the imperialists will get bogged down for who knows how long in that small country.

In one way or another, the Yankee imperialists have received the rejection of the world public. In our opinion, the rejection has not yet been strong enough. Much hypocrisy still remains in the world. In Europe, which boasts so much of being civilized, many governments have applauded the aggression against Panama. Other governments have conveyed their understanding of the U.S. actions.

There have also been European governments that have energetically condemned these actions. Among the socialist countries, as far as we know, the USSR has condemned these actions and has requested the withdrawal of the Yankee troops from Panama. We have not even heard from some other socialist countries during these days of the aggression against Panama. An immense majority of Latin American countries and political leaders have condemned these actions, some more energetically and others in a more lukewarm fashion.

Among international institutions, the United Nations—more than the United Nations, the Nonaligned Movement in the first place—has energetically condemned these actions. The UN Security Council has still not pronounced its last word; its members are still discussing the matter. But, as you know, the United States enjoys the sacrosanct veto right, which it has used time and again.

The UN secretary general has said that he laments the acts of violence. I sincerely believe that this is not a time to lament the actions, but to condemn them. He expressed his hope that peace will be achieved, but this is not a time to express hope that peace will be achieved—it is the time to demand the withdrawal of the invading U.S. troops.

It is, of course, not easy to hold a high office at the United Nations because those elected there depend on the support of the UN Security Council. It is enough to have just one of those enjoying the irritating, antidemocratic veto privilege exercise this right to veto the election of any UN official.

And the OAS, which is not the same trash of 30 years ago, is still far from being a model institution. This time the Yankees could not secure the complicity of the OAS. This time the Yankees could not do what they did with Cuba, that is, get the OAS to support its aggressive measures.

This time, the Yankees could not do it like they did in Santo Domingo in 1966, if I remember correctly, or 1965. After the [words indistinct] they were able to get a resolution approved, and also troops sent. This time, although they did a lot of maneuvers in the OAS to get support in the political arena for their aggressions against Panama, they were not able to do it. Now, when they sent their troops, they could not get the OAS to support the action, or much less join them in sending troops.

What the OAS has done is to condemn the aggressor and the victim. It has condemned the U.S. aggressions and has condemned the attacked government [word indistinct]. However, despite everything, it is progress; we could say, considerable progress. Many governments in the world have condemned the crime, including many capitalist governments, many Western governments. They know it is a savage act, a barbaric act, a blow to peace in Central America, a blow to the stability in Central America where there are serious problems, [words indistinct]. It is a blow to the stability in Latin America where there are so many and such serious unresolved problems. It is a blow to the stability of world politics. It is a slap in the face and cause for humiliation for the Soviet peace policy.

We have been warning about this for over 1 year, ever since we had the ceremony with the militiamen in the Plaza de la Revolucion, and during many other occasions. Even a few days ago, during the funeral of the comrades who died in internationalist missions, we said what we thought about the imperialist interpretation of peace. We said what we thought about the dangers of the current situation, about the evolution from a bipolar to a unipolar world under the hegemony of the United States with the (?multiple) role of gendarme who no longer stops anywhere. It intervenes in Asia as easily as it intervenes in Africa, Latin America—the right to be a gendarme, the right to say what kind of government a country should have, and if it does not have one, the right to overthrow it. We said that the only guarantee and safety that our people could have was the one that we were capable of conquering with our heroism.

How little confidence can one have today in international law when we see these things! How little confidence can one have in international institutions when we see these and other things. How little confidence can one have in the United Nations when we see these things! How little confidence can we have in the UN Security Council, which cannot even deliver a mediocre resolution passing judgment on these actions—its members are debating who the Panamanian representative is, whether it is the representative of the puppet government installed there or the representative of the attacked government, which has been recognized by dozens of countries around the world. They are discussing that. Up until now it has not been able to state that the representative accepted is that of the Panamanian Government, the pro-Torrijos government of Panama, the anti-imperialistic Government of Panama. Not even this has the new UN Security Council been able to decide.

From here we have to draw the lessons which, despite being well known, should continue to be a subject of permanent reflection. I am not pessimistic because I believe in peoples. I particularly believe in these Latin American peoples, who have been so humiliated, so plundered, so exploited, so attacked; because I believe in the mixture of Indians, of blacks, and of Spaniards, and even in some who are not Spaniards, and in those having Asian blood who make up our peoples, especially our people, and to a larger or to a lesser degree in the Latin American mixture. I believe in these peoples; not as a matter of faith, but because I have seen them fighting, I have seen them in the battle. I admire the way Latin Americans today despise [rephrases] I am referring to the peoples because there are still governments that are not brave enough to face events, but the peoples are defiant of the imperialist might. Any country, no matter how small, has put up a fight. The Grenadians fought; the Nicaraguans fought against Somoza's genocidal army, which was created by the United States. The Nicaraguans also fought against the invading mercenaries, the war imposed by the United States. The Salvadorans have fought with unsurpassable heroism. The Panamanian patriots have also fought with extraordinary heroism.

Without a single exception, these peoples are losing their fear of the soldiers of the empire. We do not have to talk about the people of Cuba. We know quite well what would be waiting for them here if one day they dared invade our fatherland. I believe they are aware of that and if they are not, they should be; because we have not wasted time; because we have challenged this empire for 30 years; because the more aggressive the empire, the more we prepared to face it with our own forces, which are enough to defend our fatherland, which would be defended not only with unprecedented heroism but also with the best technological means within our reach, with the best military and political ideas, with the best of strategies, with the best tactic.

The development of this tactic was not started just 30 years ago with our revolution, but more than 120 years ago at the time of our first war of independence. Thus, just one municipality, the smallest one in our country, could wage a long war against all the troops they sent to Panama. We have prepared; we have trained in such a way that we have hundreds of thousands of military cadres; and we have an experienced, tough party; and we have an exceptionally brave and patriotic people. Our people have always been patriotic, but never as much as today. Our people have always been revolutionary, but never as much as today.

This is so because of the experiences accumulated during the years of the revolution, because of international experiences, because of the constant observation of events and the the way the world has evolved. I say, no matter what imperialists do, they will never be able to

make Cuba give in and they will not be able to keep Latin America in submission indefinitely. They will have to face increasingly more aware peoples, who are increasingly more tired of their abuses and injustices and of their plundering. They will be increasingly less able to place into submission the peoples of the Third World, no matter what their cheap political maneuvers may be, no matter what their conspirations may be, even with their successes in certain countries of the socialist camp.

I am convinced that no matter what they do, those aspirations of being gendarmes of the world, of being owners of the world, of being masters of the world, will fail, no matter what their weapons may be. Even if they use nuclear weapons. We already know this does not cause fear. We already know it. We were already threatened once. I believe that absolutely nobody in this country lost any sleep over it, no matter what they may have, no matter how sophisticated their weapons may be.

What a man carries inside, what he carries inside his chest, what he carries in his consciousness, what he carries in his mind is worth more than the advantages their sophisticated weapons may represent. We learned this through our own history more than once because, ultimately, we began this liberation war with virtually no weapons. We waged and won the war with enemy weapons.

This is not the case now. We have millions of weapons, millions. We also build weapons. We also count the weapons of the invaders because we know how to take them away from them and use their weapons against them. [applause]

I believe that only an accurate awareness of the strength of our peoples, the courage of men and women, the courage of nations, is the most certain guarantee, even more than those so much crowed about international laws. We believe in the people, we believe in that courage, we believe in man's dignity to continue marching along the path of progress, to continue marching along the path of independence, to continue marching along the paths of true freedom, and true dignity.

I am speaking here to athletes, but we know that our athletes are also soldiers of the fatherland because they are willing—as they have said more than once before—to defend their fatherland, not only in the field of sports but also on the battlefield. We know about the patriotism our athletes fight with. We know about the morale and honor our athletes fight with, the love with which they defend our beautiful flag anywhere in the world. We know about their honesty and the integrity of their behavior. No pressure, deceitful campaign, or all the gold in the world is capable of buying out those athletes.

I speak today and before them I express these sentiments and these thoughts because this is not the time to talk about any other subject. You athletes know that the better trained you are and the better prepared you are, the more certain the victory. Heart, intelligence, and thinking are decisive and important, but training is also decisive.

This is why in the last few years, our party and our revolutionary state have dedicated so much energy, so much time, and so many resources to prepare the people for the war of all the people. If that difficult time comes, it will be good to know how to shoot with the heart, it will be good to know how to shoot with the head, and it will be good to know how to shoot with whatever needs to be used to shoot even if the invaders come with their little anti-bullet cadets because we are capable of building mines to make them fly 100 meters away. This is the only way Sotomayor's [Cuban athlete] record can be broken.

We have weapons of all calibers and of all kinds of abilities to pierce. We are going to have the marksmanship to shoot wherever we have to shoot—even if they come with an armor thicker than the ones the Spanish knights came with during the conquest of this hemisphere or during their medieval wars. Let's use this additional experience to confirm our awareness that we must be more and more prepared and better and better organized so that the barbarians, the savage, the monstrous imperialists never dare to carry out a similar attack in our fatherland. If they dare to do so they will have to pay the price they are going to pay.

Congratulations, comrade athletes for the successes and the trophies. I end by saying as Sotomayor—a glorious figure in our sports—Socialism or death! Fatherland or death! We will win! [Crowd shouts: We will win!] [applause]

People Support Castro's Speech on Panama

FL2212131489 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Our people last night expressed their support for the speech given by the Commander in Chief Fidel Castro during the awards ceremony for this year's most-outstanding athletes, teams, and sports. [Crowd chants: "Cuba is with you!"]

[Begin recording] [First unidentified speaker] We think that the speech the commander in chief gave last night clarifies Cuba's position on the indecent invasion of the U.S. imperialist forces. We think, no, we are sure, that the people of Panama will know how to resist.

[Second unidentified speaker] The resistance the Panamanian people have shown against the aggressive forces the U.S. Government recently sent has been, as we understand it, heroic. It has been the highest resistance, under the circumstances, and it has been historic. Panama has practically no army and the people are virtually the ones who have been heroically resisting the U.S. invasion. Everyone knows this, the Cuban people,

everyone throughout the world. Comrade Noriega's position has always been firm. I think we have expressed our solidarity with the Panamanian people until the [words indistinct]. [end recording]

Havana Notes OAS Resolve Against U.S. Action

FL2212124589 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1230 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] With the sole abstention of the United States, the Permanent Council of the OAS this morning deplored the U.S. military intervention in Panama, and it called for an immediate end to the fighting and withdrawal of the invading troops. This was included in the resolution adopted after the OAS met for 2 days and after prolonged negotiations were held to approve the document. The paper reiterates the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of the states and expresses concern over the serious events in the isthmian nation.

The resolution, friends, was approved with 20 votes in favor, 6 abstentions, the only negative vote coming from the United States. Those countries that abstained were Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Venezuela, whose representatives said that the document made no mention whatsoever to the responsibility that should be born by General Manuel Antonio Noriega for the recent events in Panama. Antigua and Barbuda also abstained offering no explanation for its position.

OAS Says U.S. Conducted 'Military Intervention'

FL2212141289 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1305 GMT 22 Dec 89

["Our Opinion" commentary; by (Selo Delafin)]

[Text] The Panamanian case today proved to be a powerful factor for radicalization, cohesiveness, and support for political positions in Latin America in the OAS Political Council meeting in Washington.

In reference to radicalization, a total of 20 nations approved the document that profoundly deplores the U.S. invasion of Panama and calls for the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The initial maneuver of the U.S. representative Luigi Einaudi of calling the incursion into Panama a military action only resulted in obtaining 3 votes. In calling this week's episode by its true name—military intervention—the OAS Political Council demonstrated that Washington violated the OAS Charter which stipulates that no state has the right to intervene in the affairs of others.

There was also cohesiveness in Washington this morning in reference to Latin American solidarity. U.S. pressures were not able to break the ranks of the overwhelming majority of the governments of our America in favor of the cause of the Panamanian people. Continental sympathy for Panama even made the Chilean Ambassador Javier Illanes add his vote to the motion for repudiation.

There was an important expression of support at the OAS Political Council. The Governments of Venezuela and Costa Rica abstained to side with the U.S. position. The inclusion of Venezuela and Costa Rica as part of the six abstentions damaged the public image of those governments—which on several occasions have held advanced diplomatic positions—because their hesitation is not compatible in such critical times.

A preliminary conclusion: Between the armed resistance of the Panamanians and the diplomatic resistance of the other Latin American people, the George Bush administration is beginning to pay a high price for its military adventure in Panama.

Ambassador to UN Views Nonaligned, UN Reaction

FL2112193589 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Remarks by Ambassador to the United Nations Oscar Oramas; at the UN headquarters in New York City—recorded]

[Text] The unspeakable Yankee invasion in Panama has provoked great rejection in the center of the United Nations. Testimony of this is the important communique approved yesterday by the Nonaligned Movement Coordination Bureau. During the course of the bureau's meeting, several speakers made very strong remarks categorically condemning the Yankee military attack in Panama based on the fact that it constitutes a gross violation of international law, that it is an indescribable interference in the domestic affairs of that small country, and also, because it gives the lie to the entire campaign the United States has been carrying out in that the Americans favor peace and respect international law.

The Nonaligned Movement meeting was very dynamic. The invasion was clearly and firmly rejected. I believe this Yankee action shows clearly that the United States is not geared toward peace and respect of international law and regulations.

The Security Council continues to meet. Its second session will begin in a few minutes. We will continue examining this situation at a time when there are reports that even the Panamanian and International Red Cross organizations are having problems in the fulfillment of their humanitarian function imposed by the Yankee invader troops. As we all know, they are covered by international agreements. This is how far Yankee invader troops have gone.

Commentary on 'New Latin American Consciousness'

FL2112124589 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1143 GMT 21 Dec 89

["Our Opinion" commentary; read by Rafael Berastegui]

[Text] The UN Security Council will discuss this morning if the pro-American businessman Eduardo Vallarino will be able to represent Panama in the international forum. This is the most recent anti-Panamanian diplomatic maneuver prior to the virtually certain veto Washington will impose to the resolution that will condemn its military intervention in the isthmus. However, today will also be marked by the strongest repudiation of the U.S. aggression.

Representatives from Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador will submit the protest to the Security Council and their voices will boost a resolution draft, which could be sponsored by the Nonaligned Movement, to demand the immediate withdrawal from Panama of the invading troops. It will be the backdrop to the heroic resistance of the Panamanians in the unbalanced fighting against the main imperialist superpower.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, German philosopher from the first third of the 19th century, in his "Philosophy of History" said: In universal history and through men's actions, something more results from what they intend and achieve, something more than what they know and want immediately.

Panamanians, who are making imperialists pay a high price for the military venture, open a far-reaching chapter of the struggles for independence in our continent. Nothing will be the same from now on. A new Latin American consciousness is being born in Panama. Their labor pains amid the din of battle announce that, at least in this part of the world, humankind is saying: This is enough. And it keeps on walking.

Government Says U.S. Provoking Diplomats

FL2112185389 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1830 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] United Nations, 21 Dec (NOTIMEX)—The Cuban Government has held the United States responsible for the provocation its diplomats have been subjected to in Panama.

In a letter handed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Cuba demanded guarantees for its representatives in Panamanian territory.

The Cuban Embassy in Panama is surrounded by U.S. troops. It is also known that the Nicaraguan Embassy is surrounded by U.S. soldiers.

According to the text handed to the United Nations by Cuban Ambassador Oscar Oramas, the U.S. command in Panama is keeping two light tanks in front of the embassy and its snipers are positioned nearby.

Likewise, the letter presented by the Fidel Castro government asserted that there is no excuse for the United States to violate international law and pressure diplomatic personnel.

Ambassador to Panama Interviewed on Havana Radio

FL2112223489 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1950 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Interview with Ambassador to Panama Lazaro Mora by reporter Carlos Santana Ojeda and program host Daniel Torres; by telephone from Panama City during a special "Exclusivo" program—live]

[Text] [Santana] According to reports we have received here at Radio Rebelde, Mr. Ambassador, we know that the Cuban Embassy in Panama is surrounded by U.S. armored personnel carriers. What is the actual situation there?

[Mora] Well, this is true. At 1000, troops from a mechanized infantry battalion passed the embassy and, a few minutes later, some M-113 armored personnel carriers and two Hummer-type carriers took positions near the embassy. One positioned itself right at the corner, and another blocked traffic through La Federal Street, which goes to our consulate. A third one parked right outside the consulate.

[Santana] Mora, how are the embassy personnel; what can you tell us about the morale of our comrades?

[Mora] Look, all mission personnel here in Panama are well. Some are here at our diplomatic chancery, others are at the residence, and others have been accounted for at home. Morale is good, and everyone is ready to meet the circumstances that could arise from this unprecedented situation that the Panamanian people are experiencing. Everyone is calm. Fortunately, even though these events started after midnight on Tuesday, we were able to account for all our mission personnel within a few hours. Some mission personnel in transit even arrived on Tuesday night from other Latin American countries to stay in Panama City before leaving for Cuba on Friday. They reported to the embassy early on Wednesday and we were able to give them shelter here at the embassy.

[Santana] What is your evaluation of the situation in Panama? Can you hear me, Mora?

[Mora] Please speak a little louder.

[Santana] I am asking you, what is your evaluation of the situation in Panama? Apparently, you cannot hear me....

[Mora] I cannot hear you right now.

[Torres] Comrade Ambassador, Lazaro Mora, our reporter is asking you about your evaluation of the dramatic situation in Panama.

[Mora] Well, this is a dramatic moment not only for Panama, but I also believe it is a dramatic moment for the whole of Latin America. I believe the principles for

which Latin American countries have fought for many years were trampled here. The U.S. military intervention in Panama has been the most serious event in recent years in the so-called inter-American relations. I believe this has been the worst of the chain errors committed by the United States in its Latin American policy. It will take this wound a long time to heal, particularly because they believe that they are going to solve the problem through this action. In my opinion, the problem has just started, because the Panamanian people, who were waging a diplomatic battle by resisting pressures and aggressions to conclude their decolonization process in accordance with the Torrijos-Carter treaties, will now have to wage an even harder struggle to force the invader to leave. We do not doubt that the Panamanian people will address this task courageously.

[Santana] You have just heard Lazaro Mora, the Cuban ambassador to Panama, during this special edition of the "Exclusivo" program for Rebelde. Thank you.

[Torres] Excuse me, Carlos, Comrade Ambassador, are you still there?

[Mora] I am still with you.

[Torres] I want to ask you if you can hear gunfire now in the city. What is the latest information from the military standpoint?

[Mora] From the military standpoint, what I can tell you is that since early on Wednesday morning—well, actually the airlifting of U.S. forces from the mainland into Panama has been going on since Monday—the airlifting, with units arriving only minutes apart, is still going on. On Wednesday night, when the hostilities began, one of the first targets they attacked and seized was Omar Torrijos Airport, the international airport of Panama City. Since then, in addition to the Howard Base air strip, they have been using Panama City's international airport to airlift both personnel and materiel. Thus, at this moment we really cannot determine the extent to which the U.S. force has increased. We may safely say, however, that number of U.S. personnel has doubled since last Saturday.

[Torres] Comrade Ambassador, I want to ask you if you also have information about pockets of resistance by Dignity Battalion and Panama Defense Force members.

[Mora] Well, the curfew was decreed as a result of the existence of pockets of resistance. I want to make something quite clear: There has been an extremely large buildup of personnel and materiel by the U.S. Army, and this has forced the Panamanian patriots to change their tactics. They are now trying not to concentrate their forces and are avoiding a head-on confrontation. I believe that the Cuban people and the international community are aware that whenever this was done, it provoked the bombing and shelling, the use of mortar fire, of helicopter gunships, which caused heavy damage to the civilian population.

[Torres] Well, many thanks to the Cuban ambassador to Panama, Comrade Lazaro Mora, for his remarks. I would like to emphasize the latest element mentioned by the ambassador, that is, the change of tactic by the Panamanian people at a time when they are facing an imperialist aggression. The Dignity Battalions and the FDP are retreating to change their tactics and to continue their struggle.

Reporter Views Surrounding of Embassy in Panama

FL2112174689 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1641 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Telephone interview with correspondent Nelson Notario from Panama City by Alberto Perez in Havana—live]

[Text] [Notario] The panorama is the following. U.S. troops have surrounded the Cuban and Nicaraguan Embassies. There are U.S. armored personnel carriers outside these diplomatic installations. There are soldiers with war gear. I was also informed that the United States posted some snipers outside the Cuban Embassy, in buildings next to it. I do not know the purpose of this action. I do not know what they are trying to do. The truth is that they have surrounded the Cuban and Nicaraguan Embassies.

A comment was made by a foreign journalist that the United States said through a radio network that it was doing this to protect these embassies. This is what I was told at the time. There is also a large group of U.S. armored personnel carriers at the 5 May Square in the Caledonia area, between Caledonia and Central Avenue. Everything seems to indicate that they were covering.... [changes thought] they were trying to have Mr. Guillermo Endara.... [changes thought] I do not know before who or who would be in attendance, I really do not know under what conditions this would be. They were trying to have Mr. Endara assume his post as president of the Republic. Mr. Guillermo Endara Galimany was a presidential candidate during the 7 May elections, the annulled 7 May elections, for the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance, the pro-Yankee ADOC.

Mr. Endara did not agree with the results of the Electoral Board that annulled the elections. Ballot results never got to the polling centers during these elections. There was a lot of fraud. For the good of all, the National Electoral Board decreed these elections completely null. Later, because of protests made by the ADOC and other area governments in an attempt to have the OAS condemn Panama, an OAS commission came here. The commission tried to find an agreement between the Panamanian Government and the opposition to benefit the country. Those who promoted this OAS meeting attempted to have the OAS condemn Panama, but the OAS never condemned Panama and instead tried to find points of agreement. In fact, the OAS acknowledged that the 7 May elections failed because of the level of fraud that took place. Therefore, the OAS, or at least the commission that came here, acknowledged that Mr.

Guillermo Endara Galimani was not the candidate that had been elected or the legal president of Panama. Now, when the U.S. invaded Panamanian territory, Mr. Endara and the men who were with him in the ADOC asked the OAS not to accept Mr. Jose Maria Cabrera Jobane as legitimate representive of the Panamanian Government to the OAS, but to accept a representative of the government Mr. Endara was going to head. It was reported yesterday that the OAS rejected this alleged ambassador that Mr. Endara was going to send, and accepted Mr. Jose Maria Cabrera as the legitimate representative of Panama to the OAS.

That is, I really do not know, I cannot understand before who or in the attendance of who Mr. Endara is going to take over his post as president of the Republic at the Legislative Palace located at the 5 May Square. Nevertheless, Mr. Guillermo Ford, candidate to the second vice presidency of the country for the ADOC, was calling on his sympathizers to go to the Legislative Assembly to witness the ceremony for Mr. Guillermo Endara Galimany to take over his post.

This is all there is over here. The U.S. troops are virtually in the center of the city. It cannot be said that they have completely made the city give in [words indistinct], but the truth is that there are areas of resistance. There are areas of resistance. The truth is that they are inside the city. I repeat they have surrounded the Cuban and Nicaraguan Embassies.

[Perez] Nelson, I believe this last thing you said is reason for concern.

[Notario] Yes, really. They had even speculated a few hours ago that—they had speculated, I really do not know with what purpose—that General Manuel Antonio Noriega could be in the Nicaraguan Embassy. I truly never heard that they said he could be in the Cuban Embassy. I did not hear it. Other colleagues did hear the radio that calls itself Radio de la Salvacion, or something like that, saying it. Other U.S. media have commented that Mr. Noriega could be in the Nicaraguan or Cuban Embassy. I did not hear that. The only thing I heard was that Gen. Noriega could be in the Nicaraguan Embassy, according to the Americans and according to this radio station.

I have also heard that U.S. troops had surrounded these two diplomatic buildings to give them protection. For whatever reason, I do not believe they have done it for either of the two reasons; neither to look for Mr. Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega nor... [changes thought] I am convinced that he is not in either of the two embassies, it would be very foolish to be in the center of the city in the middle of the fighting, and not be in a safe place trying to think out how to lead the fighting.

I cannot tell you exactly nor can I assure you that the U.S. troops may not be encouraging a provocation. Alberto, weighing all these possibilities I rule out the fact that Gen. Noriega is either in the Cuban Embassy or in the Nicaraguan Embassy.

I rule out this fact. I also rule out the fact that they are giving protection to these embassies, because there are other places that need protection and the U.S. troops have not bothered to give them protection, such as the large stores that could guarantee supplies to these people when the situation goes back to normal; they have not done so.

[Perez] Nelson, perhaps this siege they have placed on the Cuban and Nicaraguan Embassies with snipers and armored personnel carriers could have more perverse goals.

[Notario] Of course, of course. Of course it could have more perverse goals. I rule out the possibility that they are doing it to control Gen. Noriega because I am convinced that the United States knows that Gen. Noriega is neither in the Nicaraguan nor the Cuban Embassy. I am convinced that they know that. I am also convinced that they know that the Nicaraguan or Cuban Embassies would never provoke or interfere in the Panamanian domestic affairs. Cuba and Nicaragua—I am specifically convinced that Cuba and Nicaragua—would never interfere in Panamanian domestic affairs. Specifically, Cuba has respected Panamanian domestic affairs a lot. This was always been so.

Havana Reports U.S. Army Blocks Libyan Embassy

FL2212002589 Havana Radio Havana Cuba and Radio Rebelde Networks in Spanish 2351 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Armored vehicles and assault troops of the Yankee army have closed all the entrances and exits to the Libyan Embassy in Panama. Intelligence reports from the Pentagon, which have reached the Panamanian capital, indicate the possibility that General Manuel Antonio Noriega may be in that diplomatic headquarters. The Libyan Embassy is located downtown on the corner of Balboa Avenue, and it is the third embassy that has been blocked today by Yankee interventionist troops. The others were the Cuban and Nicaraguan Embassies.

10th PCC Central Committee Plenum Ends Early

FL2112155089 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1543 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] The 10th Plenum of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Central Committee ended yesterday its activities because of the situation created by the criminal Yankee attack against the Panamanian people. The measure enabled the Cuban leaders to resume their respective responsibilities in leading the party and the government.

FAR Units Express Willingness To Help Panama

FL2112131989 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Several units of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] have held meetings in support of the brother people of Panama. Such meetings took place in the Jose Marti Military Technical Institute and the Playa Giron Domestic Air Brigade. [Video shows men in fatigues chanting and clapping: "Noriega, [word indistinct] the Yankees will respect you!"

[Begin recording] [First unidentified speaker dressed in fatigues speaking from podium] We are willing to make a Cuito Cuanavale in Panama because the combatants of Cuba's FAR (?will teach them) to respect him! Long live the Communist Party of Cuba! [Crowd responds: Viva!] Long live the heroic people of Panama! [Crowd responds: Viva!] Long live proletariat internationalism! [Crowd responds: Viva!] Socialism or...! [Crowd responds: Or death!" Fatherland or death...! [Crowd responds: We will win!]

[Second unidentified speaker] As an Air Force pilot, I feel indignant over the act committed by the United States and I tell our people that helicopter pilots, fighter pilots, and transportation pilots are willing to fight and fulfill the orders issued by our commander in chief.

[Third unidentified speaker] The pilots of the Air Force fighter brigade of the Playa Giron guard speak against this act of aggression that has been committed against the people of Panama. We are more ready than ever. We are more prepared than ever for any possible situation that might arise and we are very willing to go to Panama to help that brother country as we recently helped the Angolan people. We want to say to our commander in chief those words that have become our people's watchwords: Anywhere, anyway, no matter what, commander in chief, command us! [end recording]

People Demonstrate at U.S. Interests Section

FL2112172589 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1520 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Report by Maximo Velazquez and Rosalia Arnaez from in front of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana—live]

[Excerpts] [Velazquez] We are broadcasting here in front of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Our people have come here to repudiate the U.S. attack against the heroic people of Panama. Pioneers, students, and our working people have gathered here to express their complete rejection of this vile imperialist aggression against the people of Panama. [passage omitted] [Video shows wide shot of the U.S. Interests Section and the crowds surrounding it. People can be seen speaking from a platform in front of the building. Some people are shown carrying Cuban and Panamanian flags. The crowd can be heard chanting: "Panama and Cuba, united to the death!"]

[Arnaez] The people have constantly expressed themselves in this open tribunal, in this location in our capital which is historic because the people have expressed themselves here each time it has been necessary to reaffirm our position of principles, our generosity, our feeling of internationalism to other peoples. The people at this tribunal are calling for the withdrawal of the Yankee troops from Panama. We are showing our brother Panamanians that we are willing to offer our blood, to give our blood for them. We are showing the world that we have an internationalist people, a people that is capable of showing the most heroic gestures for the principles of socialism and proletariat internationalism. I think that all the Cuban people should feel proud to belong to the people of Marti, the people of Fidel, the people of Bolivar, which is the people of America.

[Velazquez] The people of Cuba are prepared. The people of Cuba are frightened by this Yankee imperialist attack because we know the imperialists. We know what they are capable of doing and we are prepared.

The Cuban people wish to give their support, backing, and express their willingness to fight alongside the people of Panama against the Yankee imperialists that oppress the people.

I repeat, students, pioneers, workers from Havana are here at an open tribunal in front of the U.S. Interests Section showing their complete rejection and repudiation of this vile aggression against the people of Panama.

[Arnaez] We will remain in front of the U.S. Interests Section to continue reporting to you on the indignation that all women, men, and children feel in our country and, especially in our capital, for the criminal act that the United States has committed against a small people in our America.

Rally Continues

FL2212031589 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Report by unidentified reporters via remote unit from in front of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana—live]

[Excerpts] We are broadcasting here in front of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. All the residents of the capital and the province of Havana have been coming here in masses since yesterday to repudiate the cowardly and vile aggression that has been carried out by the Bush administration against the Panamanian people.

We can see that despite the continuous rain that has been falling, enthusiasm is still prevalent here. [Video shows wide shot of crowd surrounding U.S. Interests Section, people speaking at platform. The Cuban and Panamanian flags can be seen by the platform] [passage omitted]

The youths here continue supporting the struggle of the Panamanian people. We can also say that countries

throughout the world, in varying degrees, have condemned the aggression against this Latin American country.

We have seen here all the various political and mass organizations, and several schools and work centers of the capital. Tonight, the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution have called a massive rally here, in front of the U.S. Interests Section, to yell into the ears of the United States here in Havana the repudiation of the Cuban people, which is the same as the repudiation of the international progressive community, against the new war escalation of the U.S. Government.

The rain is falling, but the people remain firm here, in front of the U.S. Interests Section, condemning the aggression against Panama. This aggression is a danger for the people of Latin America. This aggression creates obstacles to the Esquipulas II peace agreements. However, we continue here, firm in this rally in front of the U.S. Interests section.

Panamanian Envoy Envisages 'Prolonged' Resistance

FL2212014489 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2341 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Interview with Panamanian Ambassador to Cuba Manuel Orestes Nieto de Icaza by reporter Daniel Torres at Radio Rebelde studios during a special "Exclusivo" program—live]

[Excerpt] [Torres] Welcome, Comrade Ambassador. I would like to ask you a few questions about the dramatic situation your people, the Panamanian people, are experiencing. It has been said that the Panamanian people are regrouping and are preparing for engaging in guerrilla warfare and in a prolonged resistance effort in the interior of the country. Could you please elaborate on this?

[Nieto] Yes. Based on the reports we are receiving from Panama City, we understand that a massive military attack on Panama began yesterday at 0100—an invasion, as we said earlier. We should now be more precise and state that this was actually a new invasion. A major part of the invading troops had been stationed in Panama for a long time. As is known, 2 days have elapsed since the beginning of the attack, a time during which our people have closed ranks and have resisted the onslaught by the disproportionately mightier U.S. military force in an extraordinary way. Even those most skeptical have been surprised at our people's resistance. Be that as it may, the invading forces have made a major effort against our capital and, as time goes by, it becomes necessary to reevaluate the situation because many people live in the city. In a nation of 2,250,000 people, our capital city has approximately 600,000 residents. If we add the San Miguelito peripheral district and the corridor to Colon, we may state that 1 million people live in the area surrounding the Panama Canal. The other 1 million Panamanians live in the area located between the Bridge of the Americas and the interior of the Republic, where mainly peasants live.

I believe we are now reorganizing our forces to move toward the interior, where people have different views from those of the capital. It is our belief that in view of the extent of the U.S. invasion, it will be absolutely untenable for the United States to maintain the massive occupation of our cities indefinitely. This means that the problem is just starting, that even though 48 hours have elapsed, it will be a prolonged process because we are aware that there is greater cohesion among our people, who are closely linked to the Dignity Battalion militiamen and the Panama Defense Force members. [passage omitted]

Reports on Radio Stations Operating in Panama

FL2112154089 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1406 GMT 21 Dec 89

[From the "Haciendo Radio" program]

[Text] Comrade Nelson Notario Castro [special Cuban correspondent in Panama City] has reported that there are two radio stations in Panama. One is a U.S. radio station. It is carrying Panamanian music and inviting Panama Defense Forces [FDP] to lay down their weapons and to turn themselves in to the Yankee troops. The other station is Radio Liberacion, which broadcasts intermittently on 102.5 FM, and it is calling for resistance. Radio Liberacion broadcasts intermittently to prevent its transmitters from being attacked by U.S. aviation. Nelson Notario Castro, in Panama City, is trying to obtain a recording of the Radio Liberacion radio station, which is a station belonging to the FDP—the forces that are repelling the Yankee aggression—and he promised to get the recording to us, if he can.

Dominican Republic

Balaguer Condemns Invasion; Respects Reasons

FL2112223889 Santo Domingo Radio-Television Dominicana TV Network in Spanish 2101 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] President of the Republic Joaquin Balaguer today condemned the U.S. invasion of Panama. The head of state said, however, that he respects and sympathizes with the reasons that led the Americans to take that action. The leader said that his country expresses solidarity with all efforts that help prevent countries from being used for drug trafficking. He also said that the measure of militarily occupying the Panamanian country is condemned by the Dominican Government and people. President Balaguer said that the government is on the lookout for the need to evacuate any Dominican residing in Panama who may be experiencing problems.

[Begin Balaguer recording] Regarding the action taken by the United States of occupying Panamanian territory, despite the two reasons already cited that deserve all our respect and sympathy, it is condemned by the Dominican Government and people. If an action of that nature is not condemned, one would endanger and undermine the cornerstone of the inter-American system, our regional system, the principle of nonintervention and the principle of equality for all sovereignties, large or small.

As for your reference to the difficulties experienced by Dominicans in Panama, to date neither the Dominican Government nor any other government have been able to take any measures. We are simply on the lookout. We do not know of any Dominicans who are experiencing problems. (?However), we can assume that there are many, all those who live in Panama City. At the right time, and when the government is able, all the necessary measures will be taken. [end recording]

'Adviser' Arrives; Says Noriega in Hiding

FL2212020089 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0120 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Nils Castro, an adviser of the Panamanian Government, stated today that General Manuel Antonio Noriega is in Panama City and that he is willing to negotiate with the United States to restore peace in his country.

On his arrival in Mexico City from Argentina, Castro, who is an adviser of Panamanian President Francisco Rodriguez, reported that General Noriega has been in hiding for his own personal safety and to oversee civilian and military resistance.

Castro rejected the imposed President Guillermo Endara and said that Endara was elected by the invading 50,000 U.S. soldiers whose actions have destroyed entire districts with heavy civilian losses.

Castro, who was elected vice president of the Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties (COPPPAL), stated that the Panamanian crisis can be solved only through negotiations with the United States.

Castro reiterated the repudiation of the people and government of Panama of the U.S. military intervention, the victims of which are mostly civilians who are not involved in politics. Castro said during his visit to Mexico he will brief COPPPAL President Luis Donaldo Colosio about the Panamanian situation and will request the COPPPAL's moral support to continue to fight against the U.S. intervention.

He added that he hoped the Latin American countries will endorse his proposal to demand that the U.S. Government comply with its commitment regarding nonintervention, which it ratified in August. He emphasized that the Panamanian people will continue to struggle against the U.S. intervention until they force the invaders to leave the country.

Castro expressed his gratitude for the position adopted by the Mexican Government on the military intervention, which was in keeping with the principles followed by the Mexican foreign policy.

Panamanian Envoy Hints at Accepting Military Aid

FL2212040489 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0013 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Panamanian Ambassador to Mexico Jorge Turner Morales today admitted here the possibility of his country to accept the military aid offered by other countries to stop the U.S. invasion.

When emphasizing the wide gap existing between the U.S. and the Panamanian forces, Turner described this as the war of the flea and noted that his country could turn to other countries for military aid.

Turner said the Panamanian people will not surrender to the Americans, and if the United States fails to fulfill its goal of capturing Manuel Antonio Noriega, a general in the Panamanian Armed Forces, in 24 hours, then they will be even less able to fulfill their threat of overpowering Panama in 3 days.

Turner said the initial violent and brutal action has subsided and a wait-and-see situation is now under way, with sporadic shootings but without much information about Noriega's whereabouts.

The Panamanian ambassador requested humanitarian aid from all countries and noted that surgical supplies and medicines are greatly needed. He reported that the U.S. troops are going in and out of the Panama Canal, where they have established their center of operations, and that they have searched houses.

Demonstrators Protest U.S. Action in Panama

PA2212064289 Paris AFP in Spanish 0525 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Dec (AFP)—Shouting: "Murderers, murderers," about 3,000 demonstrators gathered in front of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City to throw stones, bottles, paint, and garbage at the U.S. Embassy building to protest the invasion of Panama.

Only three windows were broken in the building, which is completely surrounded by a 2-meter high mesh fence and hundreds of soldiers in close rank.

"Yankees out of Panama," and "Noriega, listen, Mexico is in the struggle," were some of the slogans shouted for about 3 hours by the participants, who also sang a modified version of the song "El Tambor de la Alegria" to make it say: "Panama, I want you to defend yourself all day long."

Uniformed judicial policemen circulated among the demonstrators, who had been brought together by leftist political organizations, but there were no incidents.

Eight men and a woman, members of a neighborhood organization, have been on a hunger strike in front of the embassy for the past 2 days.

Reporters Describe Abduction by 'Paramilitary'

PA2212100389 Paris AFP in Spanish 0557 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Dec (AFP)—The Televisa commercial television station tonight retransmitted a broadcast from the border between Costa Rica and Panama in which four of its reporters related details of their kidnapping in Panamanian territory by "paramilitary individuals."

Reporter Rita Ganem told television camaras that after having managed to enter Panama from Costa Rica, she and her three camaramen were intercepted by a group of armed men who forced them to get into vehicles. For

several hours, the four reporters were handcuffed, mistreated, subjected to "psychological torture," and all their identification documents were taken.

With a break in her voice, Ganem and her camaramen gave assurances that their kidnappers were paramilitary elements dressed in civilian clothes. The Televisa reporter said that after several hours in custody, the four reporters were abandoned in an unpopulated area with only the clothes they were wearing because they had been stripped of their passports, money, personal belongings, and equipment valued at more than $100,000.

Jacobo Zabludovsky, director of the "ECO" newscast, vigorously condemned the incident and gave assurances that "at this moment Panama is the most dangerous place on earth for reporters."

Government Voices 'Concern' on Romanian Situation

FL2212042089 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Mexico today expressed concern about the recent acts of violence and repression occurring in Romania.

In an official communique released by the Foreign Relations Secretariat, the Mexican Government stated that these actions are in contradiction with the reforms under way in other countries of Eastern Europe.

Costa Rica

Noriega Troops Abandon Positions at Border

PA2112205589 Paris AFP in Spanish 2009 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 21 Dec (AFP)—Civilian and police sources along the Panamanian - Costa Rican border have reported that Panamanian troops, loyal to General Manuel Antonio Noriega, abandoned their positions in Paso Canoas at 1300.

"The Panamanian border guardsmen abandoned the customs area and headed into Panamanian territory to occupy defensive positions along the Pan-American Highway because it seems that U.S. troops are advancing toward the border area," a policeman along the Costa Rican side of the border, in Paso Canoas, said.

The Panamanian troops abandoned their posts in Paso Canoas after they heard machine-gun fire coming from the area north of the customs post. All the stores along the border immediately closed their doors, the source added.

Unofficial versions report that on 21 December, U.S. troops occupied Puerto Armuelles and the area that borders the Costa Rican Pacific coast.

The Costa Rican Civil Guard, which on 20 December deployed more than 100 guardsmen to the border with Panama, today at noon ordered the civilian population to evacuate the Paso Canoas customs area.

Arias To Take Time To Decide on 'Endara Case'

PA2112233289 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1920 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 21 Dec (DPA)—The Costa Rican Government has not yet recognized Guillermo Endara as the new president of Panama, according to statements by President Oscar Arias at midday today.

Arias, who is visiting Aguas Zarcas, a remote rural area 100 km from San Jose, said during an improvised news conference that "I will take time, I will wait before making a decision on the Endara case."

Nonetheless, Arias recalled that "Endara won the 7 May 1989 elections in Panama [words indistinct] military. I will take a few days to decide," Arias stressed.

Regarding the U.S. invasion of Panama, Arias said he expressed "disagreement and I said so last week to a U.S. senator who visited me at my home."

Arias explained that "General Noriega's days were already numbered."

Citing Chile's case he said, "Look at the world, look how the Chileans had to wait 16 years for Pinochet to leave, a dictator who even ordered the torture of detainees."

Arias commented on Latin America's reaction against the military invasion: "One need not be a wise man to see that this was going to be their reaction. Very few people like violence."

"Now," Arias pointed out, "We must remember that Noriega has also been accused in U.S. courts of international drug trafficking."

The Costa Rican president hurled darts at the OAS: "Costa Rica struggled within the OAS and proposed a solution, but there are many cowardly people there who refused to do anything to achieve a negotiated solution in Panama."

"I regret that the OAS did not act in time to avoid all of the things that we are experiencing now."

"I am sad," Arias said, "sad over the death of so many innocent people." He underscored his position that "a military invasion by the United States is unacceptable."

Local Pilot Freed From Panamanian Jail

PA2112170689 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1257 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Costa Rican pilot Ney Escobar who was arrested in Panama on 2 December was freed on Wednesday (20 December) by the U.S. troops that invaded Panama. The announcement was made by Public Security Minister Hernan Garron Salazar.

[Begin Garron recording] I have just received a phone call from the Costa Rican consul in Panama City. The jail where Mr Ney Escobar was being held was completely destroyed. Fortunately for him, the exact location where he was being held was not destroyed, and he is now free. I have already been informed, and we will be doing everything to bring him back to Costa Rica. [end recording]

Minister Garron confirmed that Ney Escobar is alive, well, free, and ready to be received by the Costa Rican authorities.

El Salvador

Foreign Ministry Document Backs U.S. Operation

PY2112232189 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 21 Dec 89 pp 3, 4

[Text] According to a document released by the Salvadoran Foreign Ministry, U.S. President George Bush's decision is justified because of the illegitimacy of the Panamanian government of Manuel Antonio Noriega and the threat created by that government to the democratic governments of the region.

The document released last night is the Salvadoran Government's official response to the intervention of

U.S. troops in Panamanian territory. According to international news agencies, the invasion is aimed at overthrowing that government, capturing the Panamanian dictator, and restoring the power of President Guillermo Endara, the opposition candidate who was legitimately elected by the Panamanian people on 7 May 1989.

The Foreign Ministry statement says:

"The Government of the Republic of El Salvador, whereas:

"1. The government of General Manuel Antonio Noriega was an illegitimate government created by force and not by the free expression of the Panamanian people.

"2. The government of General Manuel Antonio Noriega had openly provoked the United States of America by unilaterally declaring a state of war with the United States.

"3. The government of General Manuel Antonio Noriega had become a threat to the democratic governments of Central America because of its connections to countries that openly support destabilization and evidence on the direct involvement of the Panamanian Government in that type of action.

"4. The government of General Manuel Antonio Noriega has systematically obstructed diplomatic efforts to solve the Panamanian problem, especially the OAS efforts.

"Therefore, the Government of El Salvador declares that:

"1. In view of the circumstances, it considers the decision made by the administration of President George Bush justified because it supports the government legitimately elected by the Panamanian people last May, which was unanimously supported by the international community.

"2. It considers the extremes that the Panamanian situation has reached as regrettable and expects that normalcy will be restored as soon as possible in that country so that the Panamanian people can shape their own destiny by freely exercising their sovereignty.

"3. It favors the U.S. Government's decision to respect the Torrijos-Carter treaty, to support Panamanian democracy, and to lift the current sanctions, which have had a negative impact on the Panamanian population.

"San Salvador, 20 December 1989."

PDC, Church Criticize U.S. Use of Troops

PY2212000889 San Salvador DIARIO LATINO in Spanish 20 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] The Catholic Church and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) today condemned the U.S. invasion of Panama, recognizing that the United States has interests to defend in the area but no right to intervene in the domestic affairs of other countries.

These statements were made separately by San Salvador Auxiliary Bishop Gregorio Rosa Chavez and PDC leader Eduardo Colindres, who both said that the Panamanian case should have been solved through dialogue.

U.S. military forces invaded Panama today at dawn, leaving a trail of death and destruction as the Panama Defense Forces and civilian Dignity Battalions resisted the maneuver and made the invaders retreat. Combat continued as this newspaper went to press.

Bishop Rosa Chavez, who was surprised by the Bush administration's decision, recalled that the Panamanian bishops issued a declaration 2 weeks ago calling on all sectors to avoid a military solution to the Panamanian conflict and respect the decision of the elections.

"We will always oppose any kind of violent action because we do not think that such actions will bring peace. That is why we totally share the attitude of the Panamanian bishops, who have always defended their people," the bishop said.

He added: "This is an old issue, but it is a pity that the Panamanian bishops' advice was not taken into consideration and that Panama must now endure an ordeal like we have been, and currently are, experiencing."

Colindres—who analyzed the situation in depth—said that the fact that Panamanian strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega took over power in his country does not entitle the United States to violate the principle of popular self-determination.

"Although it is true that Gen. Noriega has violated the Panamanian people's will, that does not entitle any other state or government to interfere in Panamanian domestic affairs," Colindres said.

"The PDC, which has always respected the principle of self-determination, condemns the U.S. intervention on Panamanian soil. We believe that this is not a solution because it will have negative effects in the region, where attitudes of repudiation will be expressed," Colindres added.

Both Bishop Rosa Chavez and Colindres, agreed that the United States had gone over the line. They expressed their hopes that the problem will end soon and that the Panamanian people be the ones who will—within a framework of peace—solve the crisis they have been enduring for so long. One must realize that violence only generates more violence, they said.

Diplomats Said To Obtain 'Encouraging Results'

PY2112183589 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 0200 GMT 20 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Pacas Castro has labeled the visits made by several government delegations to inform the international community on the situation in our country as positive.

The minister said that the diplomatic missions that visited the Caribbean countries, France, Spain, and the Vatican to report on FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] actions have obtained encouraging results.

Pacas explained that the international community is interested in a clarification regarding the 16 December murder of the Jesuit priests.

[Begin Pacas recording] All the missions met with high-ranking officials, and the Salvadoran problem has been perfectly well understood. The main concern is now centered on the murder of the Jesuit priests. The delegations explained that the government is making an effort to find those responsible for this crime. From the political viewpoint, however, the Salvadoran situation has been clearly understood.

Also, the presidential meeting in San Isidro de Coronado has been extremely positive in our favor. [end recording]

The minister reiterated that the government—as a precondition for resuming dialogue—demands that insurgents publicly give up the violent actions that directly or indirectly affect civilians.

The minister made these remarks after receiving medicine donated by the South Korean Government. [passage omitted]

Guatemala

Nicaraguan Diplomat Murdered 'This Morning'

PY2112192789 Guatemala City Radio Nuevo Mundo Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] The second secretary of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Guatemala has been shot to death. A few minutes ago, several unidentified men in a white (?panel truck) who were carrying large-caliber weapons intercepted the car of Jorge Adolfo Vargas Gonzalez, 35, second secretary at the Nicaraguan Embassy. These men forced Vargas to get out of his car and machine-gunned him in front of several passersby.

The brutal murder of this Nicaraguan diplomat took place this morning at the intersection of 20th Avenue and 16th Street, Zone 10, in the capital. Vargas fell dead on the pavement while the unidentified criminals fled in their vehicle.

Further on Killing

PA2112195289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1856 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Guatemala, 21 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Official sources have confirmed that Jorge Adolfo Vargas, second secretary at the Nicaraguan Embassy in Guatemala, was shot to death today in Guatemala City by several unidentified men.

A spokesman for the municipal fire fighters told ACAN-EFE that the Nicaraguan diplomat was walking in a residential area in southern Guatemala when unidentified men in a vehicle with darkened windows fired at him with 9-mm weapons.

The source pointed out that Vargas, 38, was shot six times and died on the spot.

The Nicaraguan Embassy also confirmed the report for ACAN-EFE but offered no details.

So far the authorities are unaware of the murderers' identities or the motive for Vargas Gonzalez's murder.

Government Carrying Out 'Consultations' on Panama

PY2112195589 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 0500 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Claudia Arenas, public relations secretary for the Presidency, was asked today about the situation in Panama. She said:

[Begin Arenas recording] We really regret the fact that the Panamanian situation has progressed to this point. We definitively stand by our policy of neutrality and maintain that this kind of problem should be solved by political and diplomatic means, always seeking peaceful mechanisms. We hope that the Panamanian people will soon achieve peace and the beginning of democracy.

Since these events began last night, we have been carrying out all the necessary consultations to determine our position on recognizing a new... [changes thought] a government. However, Guatemala's permanent position is to always recognize states and peoples, although not necessarily their governments. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Democratic Socialist Party Condemns U.S. Action

PY2112234989 Guatemala City Radio Nuevo Mundo Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] The Democratic Socialist Party [Partido Socialista Democratico—PSD] has condemned the U.S. armed action in Panama. The Panamanian [as heard] PSD has released a press communique strongly condemning U.S. armed invasion of Panama because it is a unilateral decision to solve through violence the U.S. Government's dispute with General Manuel Antonio Noriega's administration. The PSD note adds that this action is

contradictory to OAS efforts to find a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Panamanian conflict.

Honduras

Nicaragua Strengthening Position Near Border

PY2112203889 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 21 Dec 89 p 10

[Text] Tegucigalpa—The Sandinist government has deployed troops, artillery, and armored vehicles around its border with Honduras to prevent a U.S. invasion similar to the one conducted in Panama, a military source has reported.

"The Sandinist People's Army fears an invasion similar to that which has taken place in Panama, a military source told TIEMPO. The source added that reports on the Nicaraguan mobilization were received yesterday.

"They are deploying troops, artillery equipment, and armored vehicles to the border," the military source said.

Some 1,200 U.S. soldiers are permanently stationed at the Palmerola Base in Honduras. These military men coordinate the constant "war games" performed by the military in national territory.

The source reported that Honduran troops are watching the borders to prevent incidents.

Nicaragua declared its Armed Forces in a state of alert in view of a possible U.S. invasion.

The Foreign Ministry has reported the concentration of Sandinist troops near the border and said that it fears that the troops may attack the contra bases in El Paraiso Department.

The military officer asserted that no additional Honduran forces have been deployed to the Nicaraguan border.

Azcona Takes Wait-and-See Stand on U.S. Attack

PY2112212889 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 21 Dec 89 p 4

[Text] Tegucigalpa—President Jose Azcona yesterday did not want to comment on the U.S. invasion of Panama. He said that he wanted to wait to see how this military action develops before deciding what position his administration will adopt.

Azcona briefly stated yesterday morning that he would meet with the National Security Council (CNS) to make a decision. However, he did not meet with the CNS, but rather with the Armed Forces Superior Council.

Azcona attended a ceremony for the Armed Forces Superior Council at the Armed Forces Joint Staff facilities and then met with high-ranking military officers.

Asked whether Bush administration officials had contacted him, as he did other presidents, to inform him that the United States was going to intervene militarily in Panama, Azcona said: "Not me. They did not contact me."

He said, however, that on the night of 19 December, U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle "tried to talk to me. He called my private secretary, but could not contact me."

He said he was told, at 0400 yesterday morning, that the United States had invaded Panama. He added: "I will not comment on the invasion right now" and insisted that "they did not contact me."

Presidential spokesman Marco Tulio Romen said that no U.S. military units had left Honduras to attack Panama. He said that rumors that U.S. planes had departed from the Palmerola Military Base to invade Panama were "speculation."

He also said that President Azcona was not willing to make any further comment and "will wait for developments in the military action" to establish the position his government will adopt regarding the U.S. military intervention in Panama.

Recognition of Endara 'Difficult'

PA2212081489 Paris AFP in Spanish 0517 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 21 Dec (AFP)—Honduran President Jose Azcona said today that it is "difficult" to recognize the new Panamanian Government headed by Guillermo Endara. He warned that the U.S. troops "are becoming an army of occupation" in Panama.

Although Endara won the elections in May and should have become president, he now "assumes power through foreign intervention," Azcona said tonight to a small group of reporters.

The Honduran president called for the "immediate withdrawal" of the U.S. troops from Panama, the intervention of the OAS, and the holding of new elections as soon as possible.

"The intervention has already lasted 36 hours, and as time passes, it will be more difficult for the United States to resolve that problem," Azcona added. He said that the new Panamanian Government will find it difficult to gain recognition in Latin America and around the whole world.

According to the Honduran president, considered to be one of Washington's main allies in Central America, the United States is "the main loser" in Panama.

The president said that the United States has lost even more than General Noriega, whose ouster was the motive for the intervention, because Noriega "was a completely discredited man who had nothing more to lose, except his life."

Noting the possibility that the Americans have fallen into a "Noriega trap," the president reiterated that to become an army of occupation "is going to cause serious deterioration in the U.S. international image."

"The United States has violated Panama's sovereignty, because its Army is interfering in that country's internal affairs," Azcona said.

Contrary to previous statements by Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez, the president said: "In no way are we going to justify the invasion, because what is most regrettable is that the civilian population is suffering."

Lopez had expressed "regret" over the U.S. action, stating that it undermined the principle of nonintervention, but he also maintained that the situation in Panama violated the principle of the self-determination of the people as expressed in the May elections, in which Endara was the winner.

Panamanian Envoy Condemns U.S. 'Aggression'

PY2112224589 San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 21 Dec 89 p 2

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Panamanian Ambassador to Honduras Carlos Alberto de Diego yesterday urged the Central American heads of states to condemn the U.S. invasion against the Panamanian people's sovereignty.

Looking tired, the diplomat said that the U.S. authorities have been provoking the Panamanian people for a long time through (?coercive) economic sanctions, interference in Panamanian domestic affairs, and military provocations.

De Diego thinks that the attitude of the northern [word indistinct] is to overthrow the nationalist Panamanian (?Government) and to impose a (?governor) that will serve Washington's interests in establishing the ideologic and political dependence of Central America.

The goal is to extend the validity of the Torrijos-Carter treaty on the Panama Canal and to thus maintain a U.S. military presence in the area for a longer period of time, De Diego said.

I do not believe that the two world powers (?would have) planned the invasion, but when two failing elephants get together the smallest ones, in this case Central America, (?are harmed most).

De Diego described the U.S. aggression as [word indistinct] because it violates international law and the sovereign rights of nations.

If the U.S. aggression against this neighboring country is successful, the Panamanian ambassador predicts a black future for his country.

Foreign Ministry Communique on Panama Events

PY2112214289 Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 21 Dec 89 p 6

[Text] In view of the serious events that occurred today in Panama, the Foreign Relations Secretariat hereby informs national and international public opinion:

1. That the principle of nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other countries that has been consecrated by international laws and especially by the American International Law [Derecho Internacional Americano] is one of the most important guidelines for coexistence among nations.

2. That, closely connected to the principle of nonintervention, is the principle of self-determination for peoples, which strictly respects the sovereign will of the people as expressed by the ballot box.

3. That it laments the declaration of a state of war in Panama and the violent acts unleashed against U.S. citizens—military and civilians.

4. That it also laments the fact that the U.S. Government was forced to carry out the reported military actions, which disregard the principle of nonintervention, as a last resort to guarantee the security of the thousands of U.S. citizens living in Panama.

The Foreign Relations Secretariat confirms the position it has maintained over the past 7 months and reiterates that the 21st meeting of American foreign ministers, still going on, is the appropriate Latin American organization to arrive at an international solution to the Panamanian crisis within the framework of strict respect for the sovereign (?will) of the Panamanian people, as expressed through the ballot box.

Tegucigalpa, 20 Dec 1989.
Press and Information Directorate of the Foreign Relations Secretariat, Republic of Honduras.

Nicaragua

U.S. Embassy in Managua Surrounded by Tanks

PA2112192689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1832 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 21 Dec. (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto has reported that Nicaraguan Army tanks have surrounded the U.S. Embassy in Managua as a reply to the "military harassment of our embassy in Panama."

He said that U.S. Army Forces have surrounded the Nicaraguan Embassy in Panama since this morning "to intimidate us."

He added, "We have decided to immediately do the same to the U.S. Embasssy in Managua, and any consequence arising out of that presence in Panama will be reflected by the same type of acts here."

There are about 12 people in the Nicaraguan Embassy in Panama, among diplomatic personnel and families who have sought refuge there.

He was asked about the possibility that General Noriega might be a refugee in the Nicaraguan Embassy. D'Escoto replied that this report had been broadcast by "Radio Impacto" in Costa Rica," "which is the U.S. radio station, and they can say anything they want, but that does not mean it is true."

Ortega Demands Immediate U.S. Troop Withdrawal

PA2212031689 Panama ACAN in Spanish 0157 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 21 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega today "demanded" the "immediate" ouster of U.S. troops from Panama and called Guillermo Endara unqualified to lead the country.

Endara today assumed the Panamanian Presidency, 36 hours after U.S. troops militarily invaded that country.

In the closing speech of the fifth legislative session of the Nicaraguan National Assembly, Ortega said that "Endara has used 'Yankee' tanks, which makes him lose all political and moral authority to govern."

"With the military invasion of Panama, the U.S. Government has stabbed all the people of Latin America in the back and all nations that had hopes for a future of peace and tranquillity," stressed Ortega. According to the Sandinist leader, the "lightning operation" the United States had planned for Panama to dislodge General Noriega and leave Endara in charge, "has failed thunderously" because now the U.S. troops "look like occupation forces."

In another part of his 1-hour speech, Ortega disclosed that at daybreak on 20 December, when the Panamanian invasion took place, he thought of decreeing a national state of emergency in Nicaragua.

He said he did not do so because he was waiting for a patriotic reaction from the Nicaraguan political parties and armed himself with "saintly patience," although he was willing to respond "serenely but with firmness in the face of the abuse of the Yankee troops."

He warned that those who believe that the Nicaraguan President is going to be frightened by the "terrorist action taken by the 'Yankee' government in Panama, are mistaken."

"At this moment, it is the Latin American presidents who have the last word, to enable work on overcoming a blow that will leave a scar that will not easily heal," Ortega said.

Defends Action at U.S. Embassy

PA2212030089 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0048 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 21 Dec (DPA)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega tonight said that the troops and armored personnel carriers stationed around the U.S. Embassy in Managua will remain there until the U.S. forces remove their men and armored personnel carriers from around the Nicaraguan Embassy in Panama City.

Ortega made this assertion during the closing session of the Nicaraguan Assembly's fifth legislature where he encouraged all Nicaraguans, regardless of political ideologies held, to "condemn" the military invasion that the United States launched against Panama the early hours of 19 December.

In his message, the Nicaraguan president said that he very nearly declared a state of emergency as soon as the invasion occurred but he only put the Sandinist Army troops, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Cabinet in a state of alert.

Ortega detailed for the assembly plenum the conversations that he has been holding over the telephone with Antenor Ferrey, Nicaraguan ambassador to Panama. Ortega ordered Ferrey to defend the embassy and prevent U.S. troops from breaking in.

Ortega also said that the United States has not invaded Nicaragua "because of the Nicaraguan people's courage and strength. There are more than 500,000 people here determined to use a rifle if the U.S. troops dare invade Nicaragua."

Ministry on Embassy in Panama

PA2112211789 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1830 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto Brockman at the Foreign Ministry in Managua—live]

[Text] Foreign Ministry communique:

The Foreign Ministry informs the Nicaraguan people and international community that today at 1000, armored vehicles and U.S. Army invading troops surrounded the Nicaraguan Embassy in neighboring Panama, in an open and serious violation of international law.

Furthermore, These actions clearly contradict statements made by the U.S. charge d'affaires in Managua at 0400 on 20 December to Deputy Foreign Minister Tinoco, to the effect that the U.S. troops would undertake measures not to endanger Nicaragua's diplomatic personnel in that country.

The contingent of invading U.S. Forces surrounding the Nicaraguan mission consists of a company with CM-113

armored transports, heavy weapons, and hummer vehicles, two of which are parked in a manner that blocks entry to the diplomatic mission as well as the consulate.

This morning U.S. Charge D'Affaires John Leonard was summoned [words indistinct] the Nicaraguan Government's serious concern and objection to the provocative and dangerous attitude displayed by the U.S. occupation troops in Panama. Foreign Minister D'Escoto also told Mr Leonard that in view of the circumstances, and strictly implementing the principle of reciprocity authorized by diplomatic practice, Nicaragua would proceed to immediately adopt the same measures at the U.S. diplomatic mission in Managua. He also informed Leonard that Nicaragua will hold the U.S. Government responsible for any consequences which may result from the U.S. troops' actions against the mission and Nicaraguan diplomats in the invaded Panama.

To conclude, Foreign Minister D'Escoto demanded the immediate withdrawal of U.S. Forces from the areas surrounding the Nicaraguan Embassy, as well as assurances that the intervention forces that have dominated sectors of Panama in an illegal and de facto manner, will respect the privileges and immunities authorized in the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations. This specific request does not in any way acknowledge the invading power's right to maintain forces in the sovereign territory of the Republic of Panama, whose presence, on the contrary, Nicaragua vigorously condemns and demands their immediate withdrawal.

Managua, 21 December 1989

I must also report that President Ortega spoke to Antenor Ferrey, Nicaraguan ambassador to Panama, by telephone and has given him specific instructions to prepare to defend the inviolability of Nicaragua's Embassy in Panama as if it were Nicaraguan territory, using any means at his disposal, if an attempt is made to enter the embassy.

D'Escoto Says U.S. Would Not Dare Invade

PA2112215289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1927 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto said today that the United States would not dare invade Nicaragua "because it would be bogged down."

He said, after a meeting with John Leonard, the U.S. charge d'affaires in Managua, that Sandinist tanks will surround the U.S. Embassy in Managua in reply to the military pressure being exerted on the Nicarguan Embassy in Panama.

D'Escoto said "Can they (invade Nicargua)? They can. Should they? They should not. Would they dare? That is something else. They know well that here they would be bogged down. We are one people, one army."

Regarding the possibility that Nicaragua might grant political asylum to Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, D'Escoto said that he does not believe that Noriega is the kind of person who would seek political asylum. He said, "I do not think he would do it."

He said that the nonaligned countries' reaction to the U.S. military intervention in Panama was "excellent." He deplored the communiques issued by "some Central American countries," and said that he was "saddened" by the reaction of the English-speaking countries in the Caribbean.

Since 20 December, Nicaragua has been in a state of "maximum military alert," while tanks, antiaircraft guns and Sandinist troops have been deployed in strategic places in the country's main cities.

About 70,000 men are in arms today in Nicaragua.

Commander Says Military Cannot Help Noriega

PA2112181489 Paris AFP in Spanish 1717 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 21 Dec (AFP)—Commander Bayardo Arce, member of the Sandinist National Directorate said that he is "bewildered" by the U.S. military invasion of Panama. He said that the Nicaraguan Government cannot give Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega's regime any military aid.

Arce, regarded as one of the main ideologists of the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] made statements to the Nicarguan magazine PENSAMIENTO PROPIO, to which AFP had access, declaring that "no political logic can explain such an outrage."

He said that, "someone must have really pulled the wool over George Bush's eyes." He said that the "surgical operation" launched by Bush failed, because, "it did not behead the Panamanian nationalist process."

As to the aid that Nicaragua could grant to General Noriega's regime now, he said that all that Nicaragua can do is protest the U.S. invasion in international forums.

Arce explained, "We do not have any ships with soldiers to go to Panama, and even if we did, the Yankee navy would sink them. Neither can we cross Costa Rica, as if we were tourists on a bus, to go help Panama."

Ministry Denies Report on Damaged Planes

PA2112135889 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Henry Briceno, public relations representative for the Construction and Transport Ministry, reported that two Boeing 707 passenger planes and one A-32 cargo plane are in good condition in Panama, and the crew is out of danger.

His report conflicted with information given by AFP indicating that two Nicaraguan airplanes were damaged by machine-gun fire at the Omar Torrijos International Airport.

Panama

Leaders Make Statements at Legislative Palace

Endara Announces Measures

PA2212004689 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 2104 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by President Guillermo Endara Galimany at the Legislative Palace in Panama City—live]

[Text] The truth is that this will not be a speech, it will be an announcement for a news conference. The country is not in the mood for speeches at this moment. We are experiencing serious times. We must announce certain measures we have adopted and we will continue to be in constant contact with the press and members and leaders of the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance [ADOC]. They will advise us in all we do.

First, this government will be known as the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation. [applause]

During the campaign I promised the Panamanian people that the outstanding vice presidential candidates—thank God and the people for having elected them during the elections—would hold high offices in public administration. I want the first appointments to be their appointments. In accordance with the Constitution, I have appointed First Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon minister of government and justice [applause], and Second Vice President Guillermo Ford minister of planning and economic policy. [applause]

One of the first matters, or problems, that the government must deal with is the problem of anarchy and public order we are experiencing. This is something that worries us all. For this reason, I have ordered the closure of all public and private establishments today, Thursday, and tomorrow, Friday. I have also ordered a curfew that will be enforced as of this moment and until 0600 tomorrow. I hope that with these measures, and the police measures to be adopted shortly, we will be able to reestablish the public order we need so badly to enjoy this Christmas within a democratic regime like the one the Panamanian people deserve.

I also wish to announce other appointments. The media have already reported some of these appointments. This is the appointment of some ambassadors. We have appointed Eduardo Vallarino Arjona ambassador to the United Nations; [applause] Lawrence Chewning Fabrega, ambassador to the OAS; [applause] and Carlos Rodriguez, ambassador to the United States. [applause]

In conclusion, I wish to inform you of some additional measures. As you all know, as a result of the incidents that developed in the early morning hours of 20 December, the Panama Canal was closed to traffic. When we were advised of this I asked the U.S. Government to reopen it as soon as possible because we, the Panamanians, know that we have an international duty to fulfill with all the brothers of other countries who need the canal to receive their merchandise and food, who need it for international trade. The canal is now open for traffic, and we are abiding by our slogan of pro mundi beneficio. [applause]

During a recent telephone conversation with U.S. President George Bush, I especially asked him for food and medicine for those people who have lost their homes and for those confronting difficulties as a result of the recent happenings. I must inform you that that aid should be arriving shortly and, opportunely, will be distributed among those who need it. [applause]

Before giving the floor to the ministers of government and justice and planning and economic policy, I would like to call on all those in exile, all those Panamanians who were forced to leave the homeland, to return as soon as possible. [applause] The homeland needs them. [applause]

Arias Notes Basic Objectives

PA2212020789 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 2111 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by First Vice Presidemt and Minister of Government and Justice Ricardo Arias Calderon; at the Legislative Palace in Panama City—live]

[Text] President of the Republic, Second Vice President of the Republic, Deacon representative of Panama's archbishop, Panamanians: The president has asked me, as first vice president of the Republic and minister of government and justice, to announce the basic objectives to which the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation is committed. These are the basic norms that have guided all our activities from the moment we were sworn in. These are the Panamanian objectives the people demand:

1. To immediately establish democracy with total respect for the people's sovereignty as expressed in the 7 May elections; [applause]

2. To loyally continue the process of transferring the canal to the Panamanian people according to the Torrijos-Carter Treaties; [applause]

3. To reorganize public forces so that they can play a professional and constitutional role in supporting democracy under legitimate civil authority; [applause]

4. To undertake the economic reconstruction of our country to provide a future of well-being and hope for all the families in the country, especially the poorest; [applause]

6. [number as heard] To eliminate, in our country, trafficking in drugs, including laundering money, as an indispensable contribution toward the effort to clean up civic and moral values. [applause]

In accordance with these fundamental goals of the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation, I would like to announce that all political prisoners who were being held in jails under the control of General Noriega—jails that no longer are under his control—specifically the Modelo Jail, Renacer Jail, and the National Department of Investigations, have been released. [applause] On behalf of the new government I would like to greet Miguel Batista and Ivan Mojica, political prisoners who have been released. Through them, we also wish to greet many Panamanians who are not here today. [applause]

The government invites all Panamanians who have been living in exile to return to the homeland to rebuild, with us, Panamanian democracy. [applause] The government also reaffirms its unchangeable commitment to freedom of expression without restrictions in every sense of the concept of human rights and of freedom of information, opinion, and expression. [applause]

In conclusion, I would like to speak of the most pressing problem the new government, the nation, confronts and which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Government and Justice. I am referring to public forces.

We want to invite all individual or organized sectors of public forces to express their loyalty to the Panamanian people, the Panamanian Constitution, and to democracy under the legitimate civil authority of President Endara. We want to assure all of you that you should and must remain members of the public forces and provide the Panamanian nation with an indispensable service. [applause]

Regarding the serious disruption of peace and order being created by paramilitary groups—the situation is now confirming what we had said would happen, that they would replace the institution of the military and that they represented an instrument of political fascism—expressed in various forms of vandalism, we wish to announce that as of this afternoon, especially as of tomorrow, we will be ready to meet with members of the Panama police and traffic policemen who are willing to express their loyalty in the terms we have stated at the traffic offices that operated in the area known as Albrook Field. We are ready to receive them, and they will immediately assume their duties on behalf of the community. As of tomorrow, we will be able to ensure cash payment for your services. [applause]

There is not a single Panama policeman or traffic policeman who has any reason to make his family suffer persecution, fear, or trouble, when he can be serving the homeland; all he has to do is express his loyalty to the people, to the Constitution, and democracy under President Endara's legitimate civil authority. We invite you to join us under those terms so that what the people demand of the democratic government of national reconstruction and reconciliation will become a reality. [applause]

We have already contacted Panamanian officers. They in turn will contact other soldiers who are at home, or for various reasons hidden, and will invite them to join the force under the aforementioned terms. We will be sending a similar message to those public force members who, because of the recent clashes, may have been arrested and are being held in various areas. We would like to make a very special call to the military units, especially those units outside the metropolitan area who remained at their posts and who have had no reason to fight, or who decided not to fight—the units within the metropolitan areas who were involved in the fighting have been defeated, as well as those who decided not to fight and are hiding—we would like you to learn from the experience of your comrades in arms. It was the soldier and noncommissioned officer who felt he should confront the risks and suffer the consequences while others refused to confront what they claimed were their responsibilities. Do not let this happen again. Let the fighting cease. We do not want more dead, wounded, or suffering for the Panamanian people. Furthermore, let us prevent what has become a deadly cycle of violence, guerrilla warfare, and repression, among our brothers in other countries. To those officers and soldiers, especially those outside the metropolitan area, we extend the invitation we made to the others if you wish to express your loyalty to the people, the Constitution, and democracy under the legitimate civilian authority of President Endara. [applause]

Friends, the responsibility of first vice president of the Republic and the 21 years of constant struggle I have waged are no match for the responsibilties of the minister of government and justice. It is a task that most certainly surpasses my limitations. I ask God and his mother to enlighten me; I ask them to give me the strength to extend my hand to every adversary who today wishes to think only of Panama, a free Panama, a just Panama, a democratic Panama. As President Endara's government and justice minister, I will shake that man's hand, I will take him in my arms, and I will help him, to the best of my abilities, to participate in a task—a democratic task, a deeply understood nationalist task—that we will only be able to fulfill successfully if we work together.

Thank you.

Ford Comments on Economy

PA2212025389 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 2127 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by Second Vice President and Minister of Planning and Economic Policy Guillermo Ford; at the Legislative Palace in Panama City—live]

[Text] Your Excellency President of the Republic, Your Excellency First Vice President of the Republic, Panamanian brothers and sisters: There is no doubt that a serious national tragedy surrounds the times in which we live, but these times also plant in our conscience the calm of a dawn that we have so much desired and for so many years been refused. The time for freedom has come, the time for justice has come, the time for democracy has come.

My colleague Ricardo Arias Calderon said that he asks God and his mother to enlighten us. I wish to make those words my own and also ask them to enlighten the Panamanian people who have known how to fight and carry out a stoic struggle without faltering, even though bad Panamanians tried to subject us to an iron dictatorship that, as of this moment, will be nothing more than an ill-remembered black page for the Panamanian people. [applause] This democratic government of national reconstruction and reconciliation is not going to unleash a phase of reprisals. We want to unite, because for the past 21 years, destruction has been excessive. We want to rebuild, but not from ashes like the phoenix, we want to rebuild with the faith of this people. I have always contended that no one is more noble than a Panamanian. This is why we owe ourselves to this people.

Duly authorized by His Excellency, the president, I can inform you that as of this moment, the economic sanctions, never implemented against the Panamanian people, but against the dictator who is now hiding like a coward [applause], have all been abolished. [applause] The $400 million withheld because of the dictator's attitude will be returned as soon as possible. [applause] This morning the president appointed a personal representative to begin immediate procedures for the return of this money, which belongs to the Panamanian people. Even though we had to pay the consequences of the frozen funds, it would have been worse had they fallen into the hands of that miserable man. [applause]

Immediately, and with improvisations, the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance economic plan will be implemented. We wish you to know that this plan has been ready since April, 3 weeks before the elections, because we knew we were going to win. [applause]

To the government employee, that brave, ill-treated employee; the employee whose dignity has been trampled, the days of political patronage are over. We guarantee the honest government employee that stability we promised during the campaign. If there is something we are going to bury in the past it is the lies and false promises. Honest government employee, loyal to your country, your government, your president, and democracy, fear not; you are still on the payroll and not with those promissory notes and vouchers that make you beg on the streets of Panama for what is really yours. [applause]

The phrase national reconstruction, per se, represents great sacrifice. We would be irresponsible and would have sworn in vain if we were to say that all is solved. This is not a problem of money, it is a problem of trust in our country. The cattleman wants to work, the saddlemaker wants to work, everyone wants to work, and it is necessary that all the sectors of the national economy, with deep faith in their country, help us rebuild it. During our trips abroad, the first vice president and yours truly, made the initial contacts to receive support from all the world's democracies. We have promised to show them coherent plans, plans that will allow these people, with a spirit of struggle and reconstruction, to see that this aid is channelled properly, and someday, at last, we will be able to sing: At last we achieved victory [opening line of the Panamanian national anthem "Alcanzamos Por Fin La Victoria"]. However, the real struggle against injustice begins today without persecution, without hate, and with a brotherly embrace as Ricardo and His Excellency the president have said. I can tell you that I never doubted, but sometimes I did have nightmares of the unlikely. Thank God, the maximum leveller, I also dreamed—and I can share this with you—I dreamed of a happy people and not a beaten, suffering, and confused people. I am going to shout this: Thank you, my God, this damned thing is over! [applause]

Endara, Arias, Ford Hold News Conference

PA2212070989 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish 2138 GMT 21 Dec 89

[News conference held by President Guillermo Endara, First Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon, and Second Vice President Guillermo Ford following their swearing-in ceremony at the Legislative Palace in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Aparicio] (?Delia) Aparicio of LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA. I would like to know what news you have about pockets of resistance in San Miguelito and the number of casualties of both U.S. troops and those loyal to Noriega. Finally, I would like to know if the curfew starts from this moment and what instructions are being given to the population.

[Endara] The government minister will answer.

[Arias] According to reports we have received, no organized military pockets are left in Panama City. We expect those still armed to surrender their arms. There was still a pocket in Colon this morning. This situation, however, could be solved over the course of the morning.

Anyway, this should be settled over the course of the day. The widespread looting is being perpetrated by the paramilitary groups, although at times others participate. That is the basic situation in the metropolitan area.

In the interior, the military has been behaving in two distinctly different patterns. Some of them have remained in their barracks. Whether they will fight or not is not yet clear. It will have to be clarified as the situation evolves over the coming 24 to 48 hours. We expect these men to follow orders previously given to them. We have received reports of scattered individuals who left the barracks for higher ground in some provinces and less inhabited areas. This is why I mentioned the need for all of us to understand that the last thing our country needs is the beginning of irregular actions. This is the current security situation. We are confident that this situation will improve with every passing hour. We have successfully insisted that some U.S. servicemen be replaced with the so-called military police, who are more experienced in handling public order situations and whose role is not purely military. For the rest of the time, this military police presence will be extended throughout the city as a replacement for purely military men. As soon as we have a firm response from the Panamanian police and traffic department, these men will assume the primary responsibility of keeping public order.

[Reporter, in English] I do not speak Spanish, and if you have already addressed this in the latter part of your answer, I apologize. I did not have a translation of the last part. How long do you think the government will need a massive U.S. presence to get established, and how concerned are you that General Noriega will hide out, try to gain strength, and make a comeback?

[Arias] I will respond first in Spanish and then in English. For us, the sooner the U.S. military forces depart the better, as long as we can guarantee such basics as security of life and property for the people—and I believe this can be accomplished very quickly, especially if there is a positive response to our call. [Arias then repeats preceding statement in English]

Regarding the second question, it is evident that it would be profoundly advantageous to the country for Gen. Noriega to be found and arrested for crimes against the Panamanian people and against humanity that he has committed. [applause] [Arias then repeats preceding statement in English]

[Reporter, in English] My question is, if he is not immediately found, what are your concerns that he might try to mount a counterattack?

[Arias] I believe that Gen. Noriega's days are over. [applause] Gen. Noriega's power no longer exists. The only thing left for him is the possibility of inflicting more suffering on the Panamanian people, but I do not believe he has many followers left. However, because he is a desperate, unscrupulous man capable of harming the Panamanian people, we want him to be found and arrested as soon as possible. [Arias then repeats preceding statement in English]

[Moderator] Juan Carlos Duque of LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA.

[Duque] I would like to know how the legislative and judicial branches will be handled, and what is the immediate situation of the closed media?

[Endara] I could not govern and be president of the Republic without a national assembly and without an independent judicial branch that would be really [word indistinct]. [applause] When we expressed respect for the people's will on 7 May, we were not thinking only of ourselves—the president and vice presidents—we were also thinking about the legislators. We know that there are election results for legislators but, regrettably, [words indistinct]. We must make a decision. Exactly what that decision will be, and whatever it is, we hope it will be soon because, I insist, I cannot preside over a government with only one branch of power [words indistinct]. I need the counterbalance of the legislative and judicial branches.

The judicial branch must be comprised of people of recognized moral standing [applause], of recognized independence—I do not want anyone who depends on me or anyone else connected with the executive branch. I want people who are independent, who know the law, and who will apply it with justice. [applause] That is why we will be making judicial reforms, but we will need to have a judicial branch that is completely independent of the executive and legislative branches. Any questions?

[Reporter] What about the media?

[Endara] Excuse me. As the governnment and justice minister and first vice president of the Republic said, we want to have a government with freedom. Freedom of expression will be one of the most guarded liberties, that is why we need a supreme court of justice to properly protect constitutional guarantees. We shall give all the media full guarantees to freely express themselves without any restrictions—except the slander and insult law, which would be the only restriction. We hope there will no longer be any insults and slander, but that would be the only restriction to collective rights. [applause]

[Moderator] Mr Lamboglia from the ANSA wire service.

[Lamboglia] Good morning, I am Luis Lamboglia from the ANSA Italian news service. Mr President, you announced the restructuring of the Armed Forces, the Defense Forces. Of what does this restructuring consist? There has even been talk that they may again be turned into a police force. In addition, we would also like to know who will head it. The second question we would like answered is: What will Gen. Noriega's future be? Will your government allow him to only be tried by the U.S. justice system and not the Panamanian system?

[Endara] I will allow the first question to be answered by....

[Arias, interrupting] I have already addressed this in my initial response, which I believe the reporter has not heard. The general outlines to try and rebuild the Panamanian public forces are: We would like to maintain within the public forces all those members who define their loyalty as loyalty to the people, to the Constitution, and to democracy under the legitimate civilian authority of President Endara. In view of the present circumstances, we are primarily concerned that the Panama Police Force [Panama Policia] and the traffic police, with their loyalties defined, once again take up service. We have contacted military officers to discuss the amount of military participation the public forces should have. We first need to resolve the most pressing problem and that is the traffic police. The president has not yet made any decision with regard to who will head the public force.

[Moderator] Kindly identify yourself.

[Rosas] Mr President, I am Franco Rosas from ACAN-EFE. We would like to know the whereabouts of Gen. Noriega. Is he in the capital, in the interior of the country, or is he is out of the country, or do you not know?

[Endara] We have no idea where he is.

[Rosas] Where are some of the regime's officials? There are some who have gone abroad. Do you know the whereabouts of at least one important official?

[Endara] Frankly, we do not really care anything about the officials of the previous regime. We hope they can live peacefully with their consciences. We will have nothing to do with them.

[Rosas] Do you have any reports on whether the resistance has received help from any specific foreign country?

[Endara] We have no knowledge of any type of help from abroad. We know of none and do not believe there is any.

[Rosas] Last question: Do you have any reports on whether groups that could become guerrilla cells are in the Panamanian mountains?

[Endara] We have not detected any groups in the mountains of Panama. There are groups in Panama City who are better described as hoodlums who were called Dignity Battalions. Those are the only groups that have caused us problems, and they are being reduced.

[Rosas] Many thanks, that is all.

[Moderator] Please identify yourself.

[Alvarez] Manolo Alvarez from AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE news service. I only have two questions. Has the confiscation of property been considered from people such as Gen. Noriega, Francisco Rodriguez, or other ardent government followers? Yesterday, the ardent government followers in power accused mainly you of causing an armed invasion on Panamanian soil. How do you reply?

[Endara] We have not discussed property expropriation, and I do not know what source has attributed this to us. We promised the people—and we shall keep our promise—that we shall act according to the Constitution and the laws. If a lawsuit is brought against any of these gentlemen—presumably because they may have stolen someone else's money—and if the Panamanian courts, exercising their judicial functions decide to condemn someone, or to make them return what they have, that is a judicial function and not a concern of the government. We are not going to expropriate anything that goes against the laws of the Republic and the courts.

Concerning your second question, we have not provoked anything at all. It is Noriega himself who has provoked this. We knew this was coming and we tried 1,000 ways to avoid its happening. We are the ones who have suffered the most with what has happened because we have not liked it. We would have preferred to have avoided this. We offered many ways out to avoid this. Even a few weeks ago we made two definite offers so that it would not go this far. We made two offers to settle with the Defense Forces and to immediately democratize and thus avoid this. The only person who has caused all of this is Manuel Antonio Noriega. [applause]

[Reporter, in English] Mr President, how far in advance did you know of the U.S. military operation? have you had any personal discussion with President Bush about such an operation?

[Endara, in English] We were called a few, a couple, 3 hours before anything happened, or 2 hours. It was a couple of hours before anything happened. I talked with Mr Bush yesterday afternoon. It was in the afternoon when I spoke to him. Do you want to know something special about the conversation?

[Reporter, in English] Yes, could elaborate?

[Endara, in English] Mr Bush called me to tell me that he wanted this military action to do the work swiftly—that they would like to get out of Panama very swiftly, to which of course, I agreed. He wanted us to do everything and that they, the United States, were willing to help with anything we want to take order, to take law and order in Panama [words indistinct]. He wanted me to know that he was lifting all the sanctions, that he was making available the frozen assets. That they felt very... [changes thought] their heartfelt duty to help Panama rebuild its economy; that they were willing to go along with our government, our economic plans for reconstruction. I asked him for immediate help in food and medicine for the people who were affected by the events and he did promise that.

[Reporter, in English] A follow-up: But did you talk to him or anyone at a high level about a military invasion prior to its occurrence?

[Endara, in English] No, not at all. We did not ask for it. We were told about it just a couple of hours before.

[Reporter, in English] We understood you had dinner with the charge d'affaires here Monday night, in which you were explained the operation. I see it looks like a change of heart because our understanding was that we wanted the Panamanians to oust Noriega.

[Endara, in English] We were told in a dinner a couple of hours—2 or 3 hours before the actual action began—about it. We never asked for it. We were never asked for permission or anything because, after all, we would never have given it, of course. We did ask that the intervention or the action, the police action or the military action, be taken in favor of these six points that Dr Arias Calderon plans, which is the immediate democratization of Panama and the reconstruction of our economy after the lifting of the sanctions. They were accepted and [words indistinct] six objectives we want that should there be a military action it should contemplate and should not go beyond that. Okay?

[Reporter, in English] Thank you.

[Moderator] We are going to allow two more questions. This gentleman, please, then this other gentleman. Two questions.

[De Pool] My name is Alexis de Pool, (Teletica) Costa Rica and a pool of Central American radio stations. We have several questions; we would like to be brief and not abuse your time. Concerning recognition of your government, I understand that only the UK has endorsed the U.S. intervention and that several Latin American and European countries have repudiated this invasion. How does this affect recognition of your government? I would also like to ask about the canal administrator. In a few days, a canal administrator must be appointed and that situation is still confusing. These are my first questions; I would like to ask a couple more later.

[Endara] Truthfully, we have not yet dealt with the question of recognition. One of our first appointments—probably within the next few hours—will be minister of foreign relations because we know the problem exists, although right now it is not the most serious; we have to face it and we are going to solve it. We believe we have the right to ask—at least of our Latin American brothers—for this recognition because we are the result of the will of the Panamanian people, not just one man. [applause] We are not asking and we are not going to ask for recognition of any intervention—that has nothing to do with us and we are not going to get into recognizing intervention. We are going to ask for recognition based on being elected by the people. All the countries of the world know this. All of Latin America knows this, [words indistinct] know this [words indistinct]. [applause] I should add that the recognition that pleases us most is the recognition by the Panamanian Catholic Church, which is a model. [applause] They recognized we won the election by a great majority. On the second point, we have to make some appointments, which we will do over the next few hours. As I said, the first appointment will be minister of foreign relations. I should add that the remaining Cabinet appointments will be made hour by hour. We have to talk with them. It will be a matter of hours. We know that one appointment we have to make quickly is canal administrator. We have already told the United States that this appointment is one of the most important. We have told the United States that as far as their procedures allow, we would like this appointment to be made before 1 Janaury, as provided in the treaties.

[De Pool] We would also like to know what will happen to the government-run media such as ERSA [Renovacion Publishing Company, Inc], TV-2, and TV-5, and when, in general, all the media will be allowed to reopen? We are also concerned because in a few hours the curfew will begin and we have information from Miss Marcela de Cruz from PNN [expansion unknown] that U.S. soldiers stopped her and told her that she had to have authorization to film. We would like to know what the situation will be for reporters on the street. A last question, what will be the status of government political parties and official political leaders with the new government, as well as the request for food and how will it be distributed? That is all.

[Endara] That is all? [laughs] With pleasure. The question of the government media will have to be looked into. We are going to have to see exactly who owns them, because if they belong to the government, I tell you that the government is that of Guillermo Endara Galimany. [applause]

[Moderator] Mr Bunting. To finish, one more question by Mr Bunting before we end this news conference.

[Endara] The second part is still pending. We are going to guarantee all media freedom of expression and freedom of journalism. I regret I did not know what had happened to Mrs Marcela de Cruz. I am going to try to talk to her as soon as possible and do all I can so that you reporters can do your job as God says, not like it was under Gen. Noriega's regime. [applause]

[Ford] This is something we have talked about a lot. The money of the Panamanian people will not be used for ERSA trash or to offend the Panamanian people or give the media to ardent official followers. There is going to be democracy where the government [words indistinct].

[Endara] As far as my government is concerned, there is freedom of expression from this moment on, and newspapers can publish what they want. They need only respect [words indistinct]. [applause]

[Veces] Edmundo Veces, Channel 4 Television. Mr Minister of Planning and Economic Policy, what mechanisms will you adopt to clean up public administration, which has been saturated with sinecures for over 20 years and has soaked up most of the national budget?

[Endara] I will pass Billy on to you, but I will tell you the first measure—not the only one, but the first. We are

going to set the example. There is nothing more valuable than an example from above, such as good conduct, honesty, and integrity... [sentence incomplete as coverage of news conference ends]

Endara Government Names New FDP Commander

PA2212062689 Paris AFP in Spanish 0505 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (AFP)—The new commander of the Panama Defense Forces (FDP) will be Colonel Eduardo Herrera Cedeno, who is currently residing in the United States, a spokesman for the new Panamanian Government said today.

Herrera was Panamanian ambassador to Israel until 16 March 1988, when he was dismissed following an abortive coup against General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Since then, he has been directing the National Conciliation Movement, an organization of anti-Noriega military men.

Endara Announces Canal Opening, Banking Rules

PA2112193389 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 1544 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement made by President Guillermo Endara Galimany on 21 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] The person speaking on this occasion is Guillermo Endara Galimany, president of the Republic. In this capacity, I have two announcements to make. The first announcement concerns the Panama Canal. That canal was closed on the early morning of 20 December because of the events taking place on the isthmus. Since then, I have asked the Panama Canal authorities to reopen the canal as quickly as possible, for the benefit of world trade, and in keeping with our well-known slogan: For the benefit of all.

I hereby announce that in response to this request, the Panama Canal is already functioning and is open to international service for the ships of the entire world.

The second announcement is that we have decreed that banks should refrain from making transfers abroad until a special decree is issued next week related to transfers made during these days.

Thank you very much.

Arias Invites Opposition Leaders To Participate

PA2112193589 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 1548 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] I would like to add to what our president Guillermo Endara has said. President Endara said that the democratic government would begin to function at the Justo Arosemena Palace, the Legislative Assembly, at 1000. Thank God this palace is surrounded by tranquillity. This is why I reiterate the invitation from our president for all the leaders of the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance [ADOC] to join us from the very first moment, as of 1000, at the Justo Arosemena Palace where we will begin governing in freedom, and with the justice and democracy that our people are demanding. We want you to accompany and counsel us so that we may begin, on the right foot, what we have so much desired, a democratic government.

As president of the Christian Democratic Party, the party of the green star, I hereby invite all the party leaders to join me at 1000 at the Legislative Palace. You will be able to get there without any problems and certainly, without danger, and share in this moment that is so decisive for the history of our country and for the well-being of our people. We will be seeing you and embracing you soon. Together we will share the work of beginning the democratic government of Panama.

Arias Announces Prisoner Release, Media Freedom

PA2112195089 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish to Panama 1805 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by First Vice President Arias Calderon on 21 December;place not given—live]

[Text] As the Republic's first vice president and minister of government and justice, I wish to make several announcements that will complement those made by President Guillermo Endara at the onset of the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation.

The first announcement has to do with political prisoners. All political prisoners in the prisons controlled by General Noriega, but that are no longer under his control, have been released. These prisons are the Modelo Jail, Renacer, and the National Department of Investigations [DENI]. This marks the spirit of the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation. This spirit is one of freedom and respect for human rights, which we hope will soon prevail throughout the national territory.

In the second place, I will refer to a fundamental concern of the government presided over by President Guillermo Endara. Panama needs a professional and constitutionalist public force. For this reason, all of the public force members who show loyalty to the Panamanian people, the Constitution, and democracy under President Endara's civil and legitimate authority, can and should stay in the military institution. We are urgently appealing to them to clearly define their stance under the conditions described so they can continue to offer the country a service that we know is essential. I am also

reporting that we have already contacted public force officers, Panamanians just like the rest of us, so that they in turn can get in touch with those officers and men who, as a result of the fighting, are in their homes or hiding. These officers will be invited to reassume their roles in the Panamanian democracy's public force. We will also make similar contacts with those soldiers who have been taken prisoner during combat. We wish to offer them the opportunity to define their loyalty to the people, the Constitution, and democracy and continue to serve the homeland as military men.

I want to take this opportunity to appeal to the officers and their units outside the city perimeter, who have not yet seen action and are having moments of uncertainty. These men must know that, by expressing allegiance to the Panamanian people, the Constitution, and democracy under the legitimate authority of President Endara, they and their units should continue to serve the homeland in peace as professionals, thus sparing themselves and the country further bloodshed and suffering.

I conclude this statement as vice president and minister of government and justice by saying that it is a sacred principle of the Democratic Government of National Reconstruction and Reconciliation to guarantee to the fullest extent the media's freedom. We hope that soon, very soon, our country will enjoy the privilege and responsibility and, above all, the human right to the freedom of expression in the broadest and most pluralist sense. Thanks.

Vice President Ford Comments on Improving Economy

PA2112204389 (Clandestine) La Red Patriotica de Divulgacion de la Verdad in Spanish 1835 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statement by Vice President Guillermo Ford on 21 December; place not given—live]

[Text] Panamanian brothers and sisters: As the second Panamanian constitutional vice president and minister of planning and economic policy, I am pleased to address myself to all of my Panamanian brothers and sisters to reiterate to them the promises that President Guillermo Endara made during the political campaign.

We are passing through extremely difficult times. Due to the iron dictatorship, our economic decline had reached exaggerated proportions and the poorest were being hit particularly hard. On 20 December we confirmed with the U.S. President the immediate suspension of all economic measures imposed against General Manuel Antonio Noriega. As of this moment, Panama starts a harmonious relationship with the United States as a result of the suspension of these sanctions.

The assets frozen in the United States will again be controlled by Panama. This will enable us to start the national reconstruction's economic and social aspects, which are of essential importance. In addition, from friendly countries we have requested economic aid for our reconstruction program in accordance with the economic plan outlined by the Civic Democratic Opposition Unity [ADOC] economic experts prior to the 7 May elections.

We need peace, liberty, and understanding among brothers. We must be able to rebuild. Nevertheless, the sacrifices that all of us Panamanians must make as of now will more than make up for all of the suffering we have endured in the past 21 years and, particularly in the past 30 months. We want to guarantee the status of public employees. The only condition for this will be their loyalty to the homeland, not to a man and much less to a government team. As we have said and reiterate now, and this is a promise authorized by and in the name of President Endara, public employees will enjoy a status as such. We guarantee Panama's monetary system. Let there be no doubt. There will be no more speculation, improvisation, I.O.U.'s, or any other such things, as there was in the past. Honesty, work, and well being will be this new government's watchwords.

We are asking our fellow citizens for patience and essential understanding because we have assumed the role that fits us under grievous and sad circumstances in Panama. But we will not betray the people to whom we owe allegiance and who elected us by an overwhelming majority on 7 May. We want to send you a message of faith, hope, and honesty. There will be no room here for political space or unnecessary bureaucracy, only honest work. Those who wish to join us in this difficult task will be welcomed by the new constitutional government presided by President Endara.

Let almighty God give us the necessary wisdom to lead this noble people on a course of progress, peace, freedom, and democracy. Let God enlighten the Panamanian people to have faith, all the faith, in their political leaders. Thanks.

Noriega Contadora 'Hideout' With Harari Reported

AB2112222189 Paris AFP in English 2214 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Jerusalem, Dec 21 (AFP)—Panamanian General Manuel Noriega and his Israeli adviser Mike Harari are in hiding on the Island of Contadora in the Gulf of Panama not far from Panama City, according to Spanish-speaking Israelis who phoned the Panamanian Embassy here Thursday.

The Israeli informers called themselves "well-informed sources," Israeli television reported.

Mr Harari, a former ranking officer of the Israeli Mosad security services, is said to have organized Gen. Noriega's secret police and personal guard.

Israeli officials, anxious to avoid an international scandal over Mr Harari's role, have put pressure on him to return to Israel.

Last August Israeli exofficers were reported to have been working as mercenaries for Colombian drug barons of the Medellin Cartel.

Radio Comments on Noriega Statement, Whereabouts

PA2112202789 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1900 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statements by unidentified individual from an unknown location in Panama, date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] The only media in Panama right now is the U.S. [Armed Forces] television station channel 8, cable, and the Red Patriotica that Bosco Vallarino is directing on radio. Since 2100 on 20 December, Radio Impacto has not been heared. There is interference, a type of void, on the station's frequency. Noriega must have shares at Radio Caracol because it is only broadcasting reports that favor him. Radio Sandino can be heard, and it is also broadcasting reports favorable to Noriega.

I have been told that early this morning Noriega made statements for 52-minutes to the Dignity Battalions and the military. He instructed them to continue resisting, to get rid of the gringos, and not to take a step backward. He carried on with his demagoguery for 52 minutes. The radio station seemed to have a short range because it was a mobile station; it has not been located and it is not a permanent station. It has only broadcast Noriega's 52-minute statement. I understand that Radio Sandino retransmitted Noriega's statements.

The areas surrounding the Nicaraguan and Cuban Embassies are under surveillance at a safe distance by U.S. forces to prevent Noriega from seeking asylum there. It is feared that he might seek asylum at one of the two embassies. Noriega is not believed to be at either of the embassies, but an effort is being made to prevent him from entering.

Caller Says PDF Units To Resist in Interior

PA2212022089 Paris AFP in Spanish 0124 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (AFP)—A military officer who asked not to be identified called AFP on the telephone to say, "We are with General Noriega to our last bullet. We are ready to face the Yankees, and we are going to resist."

He said that the soldiers of the Chitre Garrison had taken all security measures needed and they withdrew to the city and the countryside awaiting "orders from our commander."

"If we have to withdraw, we will do so. If we have to fight we will fight."

Military officers from the Veraguas and Cocle Garrisons, in the middle of the country, said that they are prepared for the U.S. attacks.

However, a spokesman for the U.S. Southern Command said that, for now, those installations "will not be attacked because they are not strategically important."

Nicaraguan Embassy Protests U.S. 'Siege'

PA2212013689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0042 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—In a communique issued today, the Nicaraguan Embassy in Panama expressed its "vigorous protest" to the "siege" of the embassy in this capital by U.S. troops and armored vehicles.

The Nicaraguan Embassy "protests this new abuse by the Bush administration and expresses its firm determination to defend that sovereign portion of the Nicaraguan territory to the final consequences," the communique states.

The Nicaraguan Embassy also called on "the international community and world leaders to prevent and condemn this abuse by the United States."

This morning, the Nicaraguan Embassy was surrounded by six U.S. tanks and about 30 soldiers.

A diplomat said that the embassy reported the presence of the U.S. troops to the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry and the Sandinist government decided, "in response," to deploy armored vehicles around the U.S. Embassy in Managua.

French Officials Alert U.S. on Embassy Sacking

PA2212033889 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0310 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—A group of unidentified civilians began to sack the French Embassy in Panama tonight, according to French Ambassador Jacques Antoine Rummelhardt.

The ambassador, who has been unable to go to the embassy since the U.S. military invasion began on Wednesday, was alerted by the concierge, who had to leave the building, located in the old sector of Panama, where the U.S. military action began.

Rummelhardt told ACAN-EFE that he had tried "by every means" to contact authorities of the U.S. Southern Command, and that a junior officer had told him to leave his telephone number and that "my call would be returned."

Peruvian Attache Shot by 'Dignity Battalions'

PA2112203489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1942 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal today said that the Peruvian military attache to Panama "was wounded or

killed by members of the 'Dignity Battalions' (loyal to General Manuel Antonio Noriega), who tried to take his car from him."

Meanwhile, Peruvian Embassy sources in San Jose said that according to the reports they have received from Panama, the Peruvian military attache, identified as Colonel Torres, was shot when leaving his home.

The version, different from the one received by Foreign Minister Madrigal, states that the official was shot when leaving his home to look for food.

Peruvian diplomat Eduardo Barandiaran told ACAN-EFE that according to the unofficial version which they received during a telephone call, the soldier was taken in an ambulance to an unknown location.

More on Shooting

PA2112213389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2037 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—A Peruvian diplomatic source has confirmed that Emilio Torres, aide to the Peruvian military attache in Panama, was wounded today during a shootout among civilians near his home.

In statements to ACAN-EFE, Peruvian Charge d'Affaires Luis Sandiga said that Torres, technician first class in the Peruvian Army, was shot and that the bullet fractured several ribs and punctured his right lung.

According to the doctors attending Torres, the prognosis is "guarded, but he is doing well" following surgery that was performed at the Santo Tomas Hospital in Panama City.

Several isolated acts of violence have been reported in Panama City since 20 December, following the U.S. military intervention.

Meanwhile, Sandiga said three armed men, in civilian clothes, on December held a gun on him and took his car. The incident occurred when Sandiga was on his way to the embassy.

"Even though I identified myself as a Peruvian Embassy official and told them that the car had diplomatic license plates, the unidentified armed men took the car and headed toward an unknown location.

U.S. Personnel Carriers Deployed Near Ministries

PA2112154989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1442 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—U.S. armored personnel carriers were deployed this morning in several central points of the capital, particularly in the area where several ministries are located.

Approximately 40 armored personnel carriers passed in front of the Foreign Ministry at Plaza Porras, where some of the vehicles were parked, as reported by one of the few officials still in the ministry. Neither Foreign Minister Leonardo Kam nor any other important official went to their offices today.

Since the intervention began on Tuesday, 19 December, U.S. armored vehicles with soldiers had only been deployed in areas where Panamanian barracks are located and near the U.S. Embassy.

U.S. Army Orders Evacuation of Civilians

PA2112172189 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1637 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—The U.S. Army today ordered the evacuation of 9 January and Los Andes neighborhoods in the Panama City outskirts, and has announced that it is going to bomb the area that a group of Panamanian soldiers are holding.

The announcement is being made over loudspeakers set on top of armored personnel carriers positioned along the limits of the two neighborhoods located in San Miguelito District. Very poor people live in these two neighborhoods.

A resident of the area said that the bombing was announced for 1300. Apparently, the soldiers are looking for "a high-ranking officer."

According to unconfirmed diplomatic sources from third countries, Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Arosemena King is reportedly in one of these neighborhoods and he is commanding a group of Panamanian soldiers.

U.S. Troops Said Making Arrests in 'Canal Zone'

PA2212134189 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1305 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 22 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—U.S. troops are searching residential areas of Panama City house by house and taking away adult males, eyewitnesses reported today.

The searches and arrests are taking place primarily in the so-called "reverted areas" near the U.S. bases.

Up until 1979 these "reverted areas" belonged to the "Canal Zone," which was under U.S. jurisdiction. The area is now primarily inhabited by Panamanian Government employees.

Tomas Herrera, a history instructor at the University of Panama, told us by telephone of how the U.S. soldiers were entering his neighbor's homes and taking away the heads of family in military vehicles.

"Now they are coming toward me," Herrera said before the connection was suspended.

Edgardo Lopez Grimaldo Comments on Situation

PA2112220589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2022 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Report by Andreu Claret]

[Text] Panama City, 21 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—According to a high-ranking Panamanian official, almost all of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] military installations in the capital and in most of the military zones have been destroyed by the U.S. Army.

"The FDP as such has been practically dismantled. Their physical installations have been destroyed by enemy fire," Major Edgardo Lopez Grimaldo told ACAN-EFE.

The officer, who to date was the FDP spokesman, added: "We still have some strongholds, but there is a pathetic disadvantage in number and in firepower," as opposed to almost 30,000 troops deployed by the United States in the country.

According to Lopez Grimaldo, who was interviewed somewhere in Panama Province, "Many units have been dispersed to try to resist and harass the enemy."

"Hit and run" is, according to the major, the "guerrilla warfare" strategy that the Panamanian military will use from now on "from various parts of the country."

Lopez Grimaldo, considered one of the men closest to General Manuel Antonio Noriega, said he knows that "the commander is in contact with his emergency cadre in different parts of Panama."

"I know Noriega well, and the gringos are mistaken if they believe that they will capture him soon," Lopez Grimaldo added. He referred to the Panamanian military commander's "adaptability" and his ability to "merge into the underworld of armed resistance."

The Noriega aide believes that most of the officers "left the garrisons dressed in civilian clothes, with weapons, to prepare the resistance."

Diplomatic sources added that only such a tactic explains the fact that so far, no high-ranking official has been found among the dead.

On the contrary, the Americans insist that many officers "surrendered," particularly Lt Col Aquilino Sieiro, Noriega's brother-in-law, according to the Southern Command. Other U.S. sources maintain that Col Ricardo Garibaldo and some other officers went to by sea to Colombia to seek asylum.

The major confirmed that the only province in which military installations have not been affected as yet by the U.S. aviation and artillery is Chiriqui, near Costa Rica, commanded by Major Luis del Cid.

"Del Cid and his men remain loyal to Noriega," Lopez Grimaldo added. He also expressed his conviction that the U.S. Army "will also attack this province," where the "Peace Battalion," one of the country's most important, is located.

Garrisons in Cocle and Veraguas Provinces, in central Panama, had not been destroyed as of 1200, although U.S. helicopter gunships have already been seen close to those military installations this morning, according to the major.

According to Lopez Grimaldo, in addition to the Panama headquarters which was set on fire at the beginning of the invasion, the installations of the Air Force "and all its aircraft," other branches of the main headquarters, and the military police headquarters in the capital have been destroyed.

The Paitilla Airport, the Traffic Police headquarters, the National Department of Investigations, the base at Tocumen, the cavalry headquarters, and several munitions and gasoline depots have also been destroyed.

According to the major, outside the capital there was also a "brutal attack on the Rio Hato Base in which the Benjamin Ruiz Officers School, the Tomas Herrera Military School, and the headquarters of the elite "Macho del Monte" company were destroyed.

Lopez Grimaldo said that there are "hundreds of victims and many people detained," but he could not give the exact number of dead.

So far, the hospitals have received some 100 bodies, but it has not been possible to determine how many were military, because many of them were found dressed in civilian clothes.

According to Southern Command sources, the U.S. troops have arrested some 1,500 people since the beginning of the invasion, most of them Panamanian military personnel.

The officer added that the shelling was particularly damaging at the Rio Hato Cadet School and at the Colon Naval School, where he said many young military officers were killed.

The attack on Balboa police station in the Panamanian capital would explain, according to Lopez Grimaldo, the ease with which looting is being carried out throughout the city, "because uniformed policemen cannot intervene without becoming U.S. military targets."

"They have permitted the looting of the city, and acts of vandalism from which we will take a long time to recover," the major said. He also reported the looting of many weapons depots.

Lopez Grimaldo, who had close relations with the U.S. administration in the years when relations between the United States and Noriega were good, concluded by saying that "I would never have imagined that they would be capable of this."

Former FDP Chief Reviews, Comments on Events

PA2112220289 San Jose Radio Impacto in Spanish 1411 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Statements by Colonel Roberto Diaz Herrera (Ret), former Panama Defense Forces chief of staff, place not given—live or recorded; monitored in progress]

[Text] ....within the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] had managed to evade that situation, and that there would be no need for what happened. Nevertheless, Noriega clung to power. Venezuelan President Perez and former President Lopez Michelsen mediated so that Noriega would have a way out. President Perez and other presidents, including Felipe Gonzalez of Spain, reiterated their offers to help Noriega leave Panama. However, for Noriega it was impossible to accept this.

The the time came for the elections he had promoted, from the official point of view, and the opposition won an overwhelming victory. Noriega could not accept this, either, and he annulled the results. More recently, there have been other events such as the uprising staged by Major Giroldi and other officers. In other words, there was total discontent among 80 or 90 percent of the civilian population, and there was also discontent within the Armed Forces. Noriega then armed the so-called Dignity Battalions, which many good young men may have joined, but most of them are delinquents and even youngsters who are only interested in stealing. I know that some of them are thieves. They steal gangland-style.

The responsibility lies in two areas. The first, and on a national level, is Noriega who has stubbornly clung to power because of his blindness and his excessive ambitions. The other is the United States, which has had to resort to actions that have been eliminated from public and private international law.

The Panamanian people are the ones who are paying for the broken dishes, as the saying goes; and, naturally, for historic [words indistinct] we must request the utmost moderation right now, in the midst of this crisis, of this dramatic situation in which military force has been used. This request is addressed to the Panamanian people, to the FDP who are still standing. There are two things which, as a military man, I must say:

One does not like to see one's country occupied by foreign troops, of course not. However, one cannot morally defend a man like Noriega, who is but a drug trafficker, a man linked to drug trafficking for the past 10 years, a multimillionaire in the midst of poor, humble troops. Therefore, there are two tasks that need to be accomplished. I must send a message to the soldiers or officers who still remain and also to the U.S. forces whose current government must be democratic, at least on a formal level. In other words, it must respect constitutions. To this effect, I must say that the FDP officers, sergeants, and troops are faced with the problem, I have been informed from inside, of not being able to even surrender because indiscriminate actions are being perpetrated. They cannot put down their weapons and go to a neutral zone because if they go to a U.S. base they will not be allowed to enter at this time. They cannot surrender their weapons for fear of being mistaken and shot at by people who, naturally, are very tense at a time of military activity. The situation is very serious and, of course, people are hiding in their homes not knowing what to do, like [word indistinct].

Noriega is also responsible for having armed people who do not have the mental capabilities to handle weapons or who have not had any training. The FDP leaders, and I am not talking about Noriega, who held the most responsible positions, supported a sick situation, a true evil, infernal stubbornness, and subjected the people to the atrocious possibility that has befallen them.

It is also necessary to note that the United States must extend a bridge, in the military sense, so that the FDP officers can say in the dignified and respectful manner stated in the international war laws: I do not want you to come into this country, but it is not necessary for us to continue killing ourselves to defend a man like Noriega.

To do this, there must be a political attitude on the part of the U.S. Armed Forces' generals. Otherwise, the officers, corporals, sergeants, or soldiers who believe themselves in danger of being shot to death with a tank or a machine gun, will defend themselves simply as a matter of survival.

I can remember the time in July 1987 when shots were being fired at my family. Nothing happened, fortunately, because there is a God. Nevertheless, while the helicopters overflew our home dropping tear gas and firing shots which destroyed the house, no one came to our rescue. However, because of the feeling I had at that time, I must think of those who feel that way now.

To conclude, I will also address the opposition leaders who have sought refuge in the Canal Zone, whom I do not judge for this, because they truly may have felt that they had no other way out. These individuals must now serve as mediators and truly behave as leaders because a leader does not save only himself.

An effort was made to send an airplane from Spain to evacuate my family and me, but I refused because there were over 100 people with me at the time who did not know what their fate would be if I left them. A leader is also the individual who directs others, and the time will come for the opposition leaders to mediate with the U.S. troops who, undoubtedly, at the platoon level, led by lieutenants or sergeants follow military, not political guidelines. This is a time for politics, for serious politics, in reality. In other words, politics are the duty of statesmen and the fatherland has given that responsibility to the trio formed by Endara, Arias Calderon, and Ford. They must now serve as mediators. This is a time of much confusion among the Panamanian people in general. There are at least 2.3 million inhabitants in the

country who do not know what to do right now because there is no leadership, and because Noriega is no longer their leader.

My attention has also been drawn to the fact that there is still a radio station which, up until a short time ago, was airing all kinds of statements, and it is still on the air. That is suspicious, just as it is suspicious that in this military [words indistinct] action the Americans, and this is where my strongest criticism of them lies, were not more selective. If they knew where Noriega was they could have, in military terms, Tripolicized [referring to the raid on Tripoli] Panama. Tripolicization is used for selecting a target. If they thought of two or three places where Noriega might have been, they could have been more selective instead of acting as indiscriminately as they are.

Many corporals and sergeants may have died today when there was no need for them to die, especially because they were not to blame and could have staged another uprising at any time as other officers did in the past.

I reiterate, in the strongest possible manner, that in the light of this drama, the Panamanian people must understand that they must talk with members of the Dignity Battalions and tell them that it is impossible to defeat the United States in a war that lasts several hours or in a not very limited time. The United States must also know that it is very difficult to wage a war with house-by-house searches when Noriega, in an irresponsible manner, possibly distributed so many weapons. This is the time when the conflicting sides must mature and act with the least amount of rancour possible. I speak to all sectors. It is not easy to offer solutions at this very dramatic time, but the Southern Command generals and FDP officers who are not pro-Noriega must try to reach an agreement, any possible agreement, to prevent further suicides by Panamanians involved in a military struggle against the most powerful country in the world. Thank you.

Argentina

Menem on Trade Ties With United States

PY2112144089 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1406 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (TELAM) — Today President Carlos Menem stressed that the position adopted by Argentina regarding Panama "will in no way modify trade relations with the United States," and he added that "a declaration similar to the one issued by our country" will be issued during the OAS meeting that will be held in Washington.

Menem talked briefly with reporters at San Martin Palace before presiding over the graduation ceremony of 18 new diplomats.

Alan Hunt, the British consul general in Argentina, has presented his credentials to Consular Affairs Director Juan Carlos Fernandez in a ceremony that was held at the old seat of the Foreign Ministry.

Senate Draft Resolution Rejects U.S. Invasion

PY2212030689 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] The members of the Senate have approved a draft declaration after studying several proposals regarding the Panamanian situation.

The draft declaration, which was signed by all the bloc presidents, regrets the bloodshed in Panama, especially the killing of harmless civilians, and rejects the armed action carried out by the U.S. forces in Panama.

The declaration also demands an immediate cease-fire so that the Panamanian people can express their free will as soon as possible. The declaration also reiterates the need to faithfully respect the Torrijos-Carter treaties that were signed in 1977 because the treaties represent a mechanism of coexistence and integration and an effective safeguard of the security of the continent.

The declaration concludes by calling on international organizations to approve the appropriate resolutions to safeguard coexistence among the Latin American nations and the self-determination of the Panamanian people.

'Great Concern' Expressed Over Events in Romania

PY2112225489 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2225 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (TELAM)—According to Foreign Ministry sources, the Argentine Government "is following with great concern" the events in Timisoara and other Romanian cities, which have resulted in "the loss of many lives."

It was also learned that the Argentine Foreign Ministry, through its East Europe department, has summoned the Romanian ambassador to Argentina "to express this concern" and to request that he provide all available information" [quotation marks as received] on the development of events.

Menem Suspends January European Trip

PY2112125089 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1142 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (DYN) — Presidential Spokesman Humberto Toledo has reported that President Carlos Menem's trip to Europe at the end of January 1990 has been suspended.

Toledo stated that "the president wishes to give all his attention to the development of the various economic variables during January and February."

Toledo and Foreign Ministry spokesman Dante Loss travelled 10 days ago to Europe to prepare the presidential trip, but they returned to Buenos Aires when they received the order that the trip had been postponed until further notice.

Bomb Explodes at Army Staff Headquarters

PY2112131889 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1258 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Dec (TELAM) — An explosive device that had been placed inside a car exploded at 1035 in the parking lot of the Libertador Building, the seat of the Army chief of staff. The explosion damaged two other vehicles but there were no casualties.

The explosion caused a fire that totally destroyed the car, a 1500 Dodge, and the shock waves caused serious damage to another vehicle with license number C1,404,212, and a pick up truck with license plate number C1,089,697.

Members of the Federal Police Bomb Squad are now carrying out an investigation in the parking lot, which is on the corner of Paseo Colon and Moreno Streets. Three fire units from Federal Police Headquarters arrived and quickly put out the fire.

Bolivia

Panamanian Embassy Requests Humanitarian Aid

PY2112132289 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] The Panamanian Embassy in La Paz has asked the Bolivian people to come to aid of Panama by donating medicines, blood, and surgical equipment. Contributions should be made to the Bolivian Red Cross.

In a communique released yesterday, the Panamanian Embassy explains the dramatic situation prevailing in that country as the consequence of the U.S. military

invasion ordered by President George Bush. The communique adds that the U.S. Government declared war on Panama on 8 April 1988 when it called upon the Special War Powers Act, and that since then a provocation and harassment campaign against the Panamanian people has been waged, culminating in yesterday's genocidal act against the defenseless civilian population.

The Panamanian Embassy warns that behind that military aggression the U.S. real intention is to impose a puppet government devoted to its interests.

The communique adds that Dignity Battalions, together with the Armed Forces, are in control of the country and its institutions. It also calls for more active solidarity from the international community, categorically rejecting the invasion of Panamanian soil.

Police Investigating Attack on U.S. Embassy

PY2212012689 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Raul Loayza Montoya, under secretary of the interior, reported today that the national police and the state intelligence service will carry out a detailed investigation to determine who was responsible for last night's attack against the U.S.Embassy.

He said that witnesses to the attack have been requested to testify to aid the investigation. He pointed out that although the Zarate Willka group claimed responsibility for the attack, the ministry wants to verify the authenticity of the communique. He said that efforts are being made to provide an official report on this incident.

Montoya indicated that the testimony from witnesses to the attack is contradictory because there is a description of a vehicle from which the bomb was thrown and another report that says that an individual left the explosive device. He said that no one has been arrested for the attack and reiterated that a request was made to witnesses to testify and to help in the investigation.

Annual Inflation Rate Reported To Be 15 Percent

PY2212051689 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Summary] Finance Minister David Blanco has pointed out that the annual 1989 inflation rate totals 15.5 percent.

Chile

FPMR Threatens 'Any U.S. Objective' in Chile

PY2212005389 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 0020 GMT 22 Dec 89

[All quotation marks as received]

[Text] Santiago, 21 Dec (AFP)—The Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR), the largest clandestine leftist guerrilla group in Chile, announced today that it will attack "any U.S. objective in Chile" in view of the U.S. invasion of Panama. Through a telephone call to the media, FPMR Spokesperson Mariela Vargas—a member of the FPMR's "autonomous" sector—reported that (?the FPMR will attack) any U.S. objective in Chile."

Vargas stated that "we categorically reject and condemn the U.S. terrorist invasion of the Panamanian nation." The FPMR promotes "all forms of struggle" against the military government.

She said that, according to reports supplied by the "Dignity" Battalions (organized militias), U.S. helicopters continuously bombed the San Miguelito sector in Panama City this morning.

Mariela Vargas added that "we believe that all nations and democratic forces have the moral duty to denounce this action and to undertake specific measures against such an unjustifiable criminal action." Mariela Vargas also urged the Chilean people "to actively demand the immediate withdrawal of the invader."

Pinochet, Aylwin Hold 'Positive' Talks

PY2212015989 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Report by Graciela Contreras from Government House]

[Text] President-elect Patricio Aylwin will submit a paper to the head of state on the opposition's assessment of and comments on the constitutional Armed Forces organizational law to assess the opposition coalition's comments on this law. This was one of the many agreements reached here this afternoon between the head of state and the opposition's representative.

Interior Minister Carlos Caceres made this report after a 55-minute meeting between Pinochet and the president-elect. Aylwin described the meeting as positive and constructive.

Aylwin's arrival at La Moneda at 1700 sharp aroused strong expectations not only in media circles, but also among the citizens gathered in Constitution Square, who cheered their respective leaders.

The wait during the meeting inside Government House was occasionally tense for the reporters, as there were a lot of guesses being made as to what was going on. It was later made clear that the interior minister and the minister secretary general of the presidency participated in the meeting, while Aylwin was accompanied by Enrique Krauss.

Caceres emphasized in a brief news conference that, upon greeting Pinochet, the president-elect acknowledged the government's behavior throughout the preelectoral period and on election day.

The interior minister later reported the following:

[Begin Caceres recording] Later in the meeting we reviewed several issues, especially regarding the bills that are currently being discussed by the government junta, particularly the constitutional Armed Forces organizational law. It was also agreed that President-elect Patricio Aylwin would submit a paper to His Excellency, the president of the Republic, to give the opposition's assessment of this law.

The same criterion was applied to the rest of the bills that were reviewed during the meeting with the purpose of establishing a fluid contact between the government's interlocutors, in this case the interior minister and the minister secretary general of the presidency, and the persons who will act as representatives for President-elect Patricio Aylwin, namely Mr Enrique Krauss and Mr Alejandro Foxley, especially regarding economic issues. [end recording]

The interior minister said that the issue of transfering power was reviewed during the meeting. However, no details on the transition ceremony itself were announced. It was agreed that a meeting will be scheduled for persons appointed by the president-elect and representatives of the government's working commissions.

Finally, the president of the Republic and the president-elect agreed that they would meet again to discuss any other issue.

The contact will be very smooth, as it was this afternoon, the minister reiterated. He pointed out that there was a very cordial, respectful atmosphere, appropriate for the standing of the persons participating in the meeting.

Pinochet To Continue as Army Commander

PY2112124489 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Excerpts] President Augusto Pinochet has asked the newly-elected authorities to recognize and consolidate the achievements of the past years. He made this appeal in a speech to the last regular meeting of the Socioeconomic Council [CES], which was held at (La Dehesa). [passage omitted]

The president told the CES that a fruitful stage, which has been marked by difficulties and lack of understanding, has practically ended. He said: As a soldier and as a president, however, I want to reiterate that this sacrifice has been strengthened my spirit.

[Begin Pinochet recording] Consequently, I feel stronger than ever to discharge my institutional duties as the Army commander in chief as of 11 March 1990. I will continue to give my best efforts for the good of Chile and of my fellow countrymen. [end recording]

He urged CES members to continue to encourage the participation of the rank-and-file in the issues which will affect our common destiny.

Colombia

Londono Demands U.S. Withdrawal; Rejects Endara

PY2112205989 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes stated in Bogota today that any agreement or negotiation to resolve the Panamanian conflict is tied to the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops.

The Colombian Government believes that the U.S. troops that have invaded Panama must withdraw immediately to allow a clarification of the situation in that country. This is what Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes told this TV station:

[Begin Londono recording] The Panamanian people have the right to finally exercise their self-determination and to govern through the popular will, not through the force of bayonets wielded by a military organization, as has been the case so far. [end recording]

The Foreign Minister also said that, at least for the time being, the Colombian Government will not recognize the U.S.-appointed Guillermo Endara as president of Panama.

[Begin Londono recording] For the time being, the Colombian Government has not considered the recognition of Mr Endara and his vice presidents. [end recording]

The consultative group of the Group of Eight will possibly meet in Washington on Saturday. This meeting has been called by the Venezuelan Government through its Foreign Minister Reinaldo Figueredo. The Colombian foreign minister will not attend this meeting.

Further on Londono Comments

PA2112165989 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1557 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Bogota, 21 Dec (EFE)—Colombian Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes today condemned the invasion of Panama and demanded that the U.S. troops withdraw "immediately" as an "essential" condition for the Panamanian people "to be governed by the people's will."

"We regard, as essential, the immediate withdrawal of the U.S. military forces from Panama because any process or action must be based on the suspension of the U.S. military action," Londono said this morning.

Londono added: "The intervention of foreign forces in any one country, particularly in the bloody manner in which it was applied in Panama, must be rejected by all states. We expect these troops to pull out as soon as it is practicable."

He said further: "No state or group of states can claim the right to intervene, either directly or indirectly, in the

domestic affairs of a state, regardless of the purpose, and much less act against a country militarily, no matter what the country's characteristics are. We believe that the Panamanian people must be the ones to decide who will govern them and how they will be governed.

"For the time being, the Colombian Government has not considered recognizing Endara and his vice presidents," Londono concluded.

Ecuador

AVC Proposes Reactivation of America Battalion

PA2212062389 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0447 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Text] Quito, 21 Dec (EFE)—The former guerrillas of the Ecuadoran Alfaro Lives, Dammit! [AVC], today proposed the reactivation of the international "America Battalion" to take up the defense of Panama.

In an unsigned communique, the AVC called on "volunteers," specifically members of the Colombian M-19 [19 April Movement], to coordinate actions in this attempt.

The "America Battalion" was comprised of the Colombian M-19, the Ecuadoran AVC, and the Peruvian Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

The AVC also suggested the beginning of basic training and the formation of groups to collect money to finance the volunteer's trip.

"We have a single slogan: Out with the invaders. After that, the Latin American governments can act with more determination and energy to ensure a just and legal democratic process," the AVC added.

The AVC, an urban guerrilla group that was very active early in this decade, declared an "armed truce" in March after reaching an agreement with the Ecuadoran Government.

General Frank Vargas Pazzos, former Ecuadoran Air Force (FAE) general, today also called on Ecuadoreans to fight in the defense of Panama and announced the formation of a Latin American brigade, the Simon Bolivar Brigade, to travel to the isthmus and "repel the U.S. troops' invasion."

Peru

Further Reaction to U.S. Actions in Panama

Garcia on Panama; Recall of Ambassador

PY2212040589 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Dec 89

[Interview with President Alan Garcia by unidentified reporter in Lima on 21 December—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Reporter] What important subjects were discussed in the Council of Ministers meeting today?

[Garcia] The main subject was the decision to call a special congressional session on 22-23 December to consider the serious situation created by the U.S. invasion of Panama. The second important subject was the decision to criticize the TIAR, a military organization that groups all the Latin American countries and the United States and which, on several occasions, has proved to be absolutely ineffective and biased.

The Malvinas Islands situation is a good example. According to the TIAR, the United States should have supported Argentina, but it did exactly the opposite, supporting the United Kingdom.

Now, in this case with Panama, the TIAR has not served any purpose. Rather, it has served to mask the U.S. invasion of Panama. Therefore, because we consider the TIAR to be ineffective and senseless, we, as a Republic, must denounce it. We must withdraw our signature from the TIAR. This must be done through Congress, and that is why we have called a special session.

[Reporter] Several sectors have described the decision to withdraw the Peruvian ambassador to the United States as a hasty decision. What do you think of that?

[Garcia] I think that those must be sectors committed to the invasion. They must support a rightist concept by which the United States has the hegemonic right to safeguard our destiny and to decide who can govern us and who cannot.

As Peruvians and Latin Americans, we feel that the aggressive and bloody action by U.S. troops to occupy a small country is a violation. There are currently nearly 30,000 U.S. soldiers in Panamanian territory. They have killed many people, and they want to impose a new government. Thus, as long as those troops remain there—as long as this violation to Latin America is maintained—our ambassador will not stay in that country. This does not imply a break in relations; it represents a clear gesture of condemnation and dislike.

As long as a U.S. soldier violates the Republic of Panama, we will keep our ambassador here. As long as the United States does not withdraw their troops and Panama remains occupied, the Panamanian and Peruvian flags will remain together.

[Reporter] Might this attitude not harm certain relations with the United States; that is, could it jeopardize the IMF loan?

[Garcia] Not at all. These are two absolutely different things. The negotiations with the IMF are one thing; the international political attitude of a government that abuses its economic and military power with other countries is something else.

Besides, we should mention something very important. As for Panamanian-U.S. relations, the Americans have

been the main agents in depriving Panama of democracy. When elections took place in 1984, when Arnulfo Arias should have won, the United States decided that it was not convenient that Arias should win, so a large fraud—as it was declared at the time—was carried out to place Nicolas Ardito Barletta in power. The first ones to recognize Barletta were the Americans. Barletta was placed in the Presidency by Noriega.

In 1985, Noriega removed Barletta and put Eric Arturo Delvalle in his place. The Americans immediately recognized Delvalle as president. Therefore, the United States has been Noriega's accomplice in depriving Panama of democracy. We denounced this. Noriega is a creation of the United States. It has repeatedly been said that Noriega worked with the United States and with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, where President Bush was once chief.

Therefore, now that the servant is talking back, making claims on the Panama Canal and wanting to become independent from the United States, the United States suddenly discovers that he is a drug trafficker and that he does not serve its interests, so they send 30,000 U.S. soldiers to Panama. This is an abuse. It is a violation of the sovereignty of another state.

No honorable Latin American country should tolerate this invasion without actively and openly condemning it. One way to condemn it and express disapproval of it is to say that as long as the troops invading Latin America remain, we do not need to maintain our ambassador there.

[Reporter] Is the Group of Eight going to submit a protest?

[Garcia] I am actually wondering about what the Group of Eight's attitude will be. I can talk about Peru's position. Peru has a dignified, anti-imperialist, and sovereign attitude. Peru repudiates and condemns the attack and declares itself in solidarity with the Panamanian people. I am struck by the report, released around the world, that states that the U.S. President consulted with Latin American presidents on the possibility of this invasion. This has very serious implications. If this is true, it means that there are informers in Latin America, like the Indians who helped the Spaniards conquer Peru. This means that we have new informers in Latin America, who are giving their consent and will for foreign troops to enter the continent.

We are making the appropriate consultations to determine the attitudes and levels of decision of the members of the Group of Eight and other Latin American countries.

[Reporter] Mr President, the Peruvian Government has proposed that the meeting of the presidents of Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, and the United States be postponed. Have you already talked about this with President Bush or with the presidents of Bolivia and Colombia?

[Garcia] No. We have reported in an an open letter that, under these conditions, with Panama invaded by 30,000 U.S. troops, I cannot meet with the chief of an invading or aggressive state.

Is there no feeling in Latin America against the insult, infamy, and violation this represents? I see an attitude of minimizing this case, an attitude of consent to an imperialist power by some sectors, by people who lack the character to defend our dignity. How can I meet with a president who just trampled on Latin America?

What if he suddenly thinks that Peru is not making a serious enough effort against the drug traffickers in the Huallaga Valley and sends 40,000 soldiers there? What would you say? Would you sit at a table to talk with the U.S. President? How can a country talk with a gun on the table? We cannot tolerate this.

We are very respectful. We say things calmly, but when serious cases like this occur, we must categorically condemn them; reason is on the side of Latin America.

[Reporter] What will happen with the struggle against drug trafficking?

[Garcia] Peru will continue with its struggle against drug trafficking, which does not depend on the talks with Bush. I have not accepted any phone call from any U.S. Government official since 0200 yesterday. They have been phoning here probably to smooth things out, to consult after committing outrages. I have not accepted any call. I do not think that we will be able to talk as long as this situation continues, because it is like talking with a gun on the table. It would not be a dialogue. They are saying: Do what I want or I will invide your country. What is this? We are a poor country, but we are honorable, free, and sovereign.

We will continue to struggle against the drug traffickers and illegal drug producers. This struggle does not depend on whether we sit at a table with people—much less under these ignoble conditions—who put a gun on the table and who trample on us if we do not do what they want.

[Reporter] Will our country remain firm in the face of any U.S. decision?

[Garcia] Obviously. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Congressmen Reject U.S. Invasion

PY2112155889 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1300 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Congressmen of various political parties have forcefully protested the U.S. invasion of Panama. This aggression cannot be overlooked by Latin America. American Popular Revolutionary Alliance Senator Armando Villanueva del Campo, United Left Deputy Manuel Benza Pflucker, and others have expressed their rejection.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] How did you, who know so much about international politics, react to the U.S. invasion of our sisterly Republic of Panama?

[Villanueva] This was an awkward imperialistic maneuver that has transformed a dictator into a hero, a hero who is defending his country. It is an awkward imperialistic maneuver because, while the world is seeking to achieve integration based on respect for the rights, freedom, and self-determination of the peoples, the United States resorted to the old-fashioned style of aggression that was common when Haya de la Torre started to fight imperialism.

All nations must unanimously reject this maneuver. This disgraceful war, which will be won by the Panamanian people, should warn the Latin American and Caribbean countries against the danger of not being firmly united in our anti-imperialistic position. [passage omitted]

[Benza] This is a violation of Panamanian sovereignty, of the sovereignty of a Latin American country, therefore, I believe that Peru must demand that the OAS meet to condemn the invasion. If, as a result of U.S. pressure, this meeting is not held, then Peru must withdraw from the OAS.

[Reporter] Is this foreseen in the OAS (?statutes)?

[Benza] Yes, of course, any country can sovereignly do it, and must do it, if it values its sovereign rights. Peru must also call back its ambassador to the United States until the conflict is made clear.

[Reporter] Some time ago a new administrator for the Panama Canal was appointed. Surprisingly, the chosen administrator was a U.S. citizen. [as heard] Doesn't this violate the Torrijos-Carter Treaty?

[Benza] Of course it does. The Torrijos-Carter treaty establishes that as of 1 January 1990, in 2 weeks time, the Canal administrator must be, for the first time, a Panamanian citizen.

However, 20 days ago, the U.S. Government appointed a U.S. citizen for the position. [as heard] This deed showed that the United States intended to invade Panama. This clearly shows that the operation is not meant to apprehend Noriega. Noriega may be a bad leader, but this is up to the Panamanians to decide, right? I must inform the Peruvian people of the reason for this invasion: The United States invaded Panama because, according to the Torrijos-Carter treaty, in exactly 10 years—at the end of 1999— the Panama Canal must be handed over to Panama, and the United States does not want to do this.

[Reporter] Why?

[Benza] Because the United States, that built the canal, believes it is the sole owner and does not want to hand it over to Panama. They are aware of the strategic importance of this canal. For us Peruvians, who trade with Europe and the United States, it is important to see the canal in the hands of Panama instead of in the hands of the United States, because Panama would charge us less to take our merchandise through the canal on its way to Europe. [end recording]

Youth To Demonstrate at U.S. Embassy

PY2112200389 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Dec 89

[Text] Tonight at 1900, the youth sector of the APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] will march in front of the U.S. Embassy to protest the U.S. intervention in Panamanian territory. The youth group will gather at APRA headquarters before the march.